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A LITERARY HISTORY OF THE 'SOUL AND BODY'  
THEME IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND

Claudio Cataldi

A dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with  
the requirements for award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the  
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## ABSTRACT

This dissertation seeks to reconstruct the development of the literary ‘Soul and Body’ theme over time. This theme is preserved and developed in several medieval English texts, both in prose and verse, dating from the tenth to the fifteenth century. Central to this theme is an opposition between the eternal soul and the decaying body; this opposition was elaborated both in the form of a monologue in which the soul accuses a silent body and in the form of a debate in which the two sides dispute over the responsibility for sin and eternal damnation. The first part of the Introduction offers a brief overview of the previous scholarship, highlighting the need for a more comprehensive treatment of the theme. The Introduction also outlines its origins, which have been traced by nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars to the earliest century of the Christian era in the Mediterranean area. My methodological model for the study of how traditional material was reworked is Ernst Robert Curtius, and his concept of the *topos*. To analyse in detail how the Soul and Body *topos* changed over time, I break the *topos* down into smaller motifs, which constitute its ‘building blocks’. Using this methodological approach, the first chapter proposes a classification of the various ‘Soul and Body’ texts of the Old English period into three groups, which are characterized by the occurrence of several shared motifs. The crystallization of these motifs into a structured and recognized sub-genre in the early Middle English phase is the focus of Chapter 2. The third chapter discusses how this sub-genre became part of the wider genre of medieval debate poetry between the twelfth and the fifteenth centuries. Finally, the results of the investigation carried out in the present dissertation are summarized in a general conclusion.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would have not been possible without the supervision of Professor Ad Putter and Professor Helen Fulton (University of Bristol). One can hardly find a single paragraph that has not benefited from their painstaking guidance and invaluable suggestions. Their supervision has also been invaluable for my personal growth as a scholar; being one of their PhD students has been both an honour and a pleasure.

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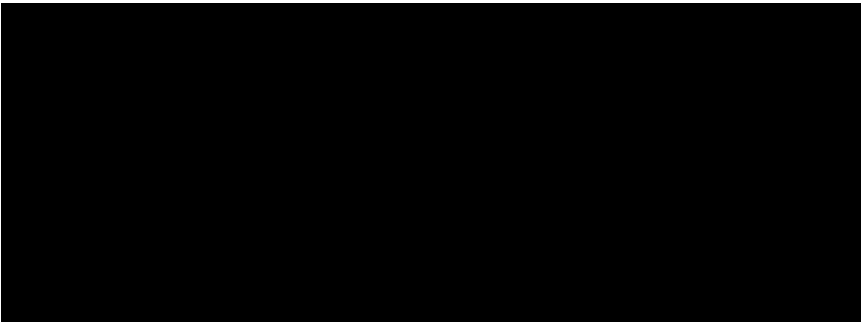
This dissertation has also benefited from the help of Dr Ian Wei (University of Bristol), who provided me with useful resources on medieval *declamatio* and *disputatio*. Professor Bella Millett (University of Southampton) kindly commented on earlier drafts of the section on *De Sancto Andrea* and suggested key improvements. Professor Millett and Dr Myra Stokes (University of Bristol) also offered many important suggestions, comments and notes on the dissertation and on my translations during my viva. Dr Cathy Hume and Dr Sebastiaan Verveij (University of Bristol) suggested revisions to the third chapter for my first-year upgrade. The Medieval Latin Reading Group of the Centre for Medieval Studies at the University of Bristol helped me to translate the *Visio Philiberti* and discussed my draft translation. Hatsuko Matsuda (University of Bristol) helped me to translate the Greek passages. Dr Margaret Laing (University of Edinburgh) and Dr Greti Dinkova-Bruun (University of Toronto) commented on an earlier draft of the paragraph on *Purpura cum bisso*.

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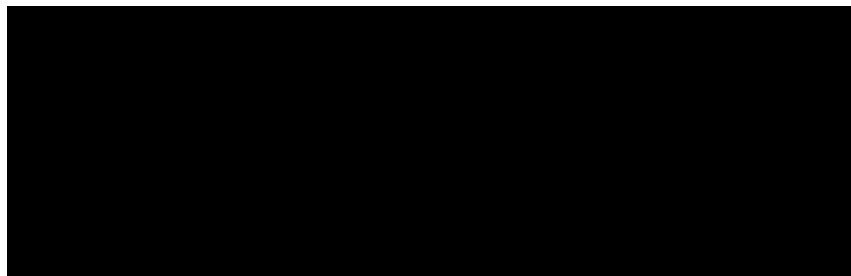
## AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's *Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes* and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate’s own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.



Publications arising from the research:

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## ABBREVIATIONS

ARLIMA	<i>Archives de littérature du Moyen Âge</i>
BL	British Library
CCCC	Cambridge, Corpus Christi College
CCCM	Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaevalis
CSEL	Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum
CUL	Cambridge, University Library
CPPM	<i>Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum Medii Aevi</i>
EETS, OS	Early English Text Society, Original Series
EETS, SS	Early English Text Society, Supplementary Series
eLALME	<i>An Electronic Version of A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English</i>
JEGP	<i>The Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>
LAEME	<i>A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English, 1150-1325</i>
MED	<i>Middle English Dictionary Online</i>
OED	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary Online</i> , 3 <sup>rd</sup> edition in progress
PG	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca</i>
PL	<i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina</i>
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>

# INTRODUCTION

## I.1. THE 'SOUL AND BODY' THEME: AN OVERVIEW OF THE FIELD

The 'Soul and Body' literary theme is based on a penitential topos in which a damned soul addresses its former body with words of reproach because of the many sins committed during its lifetime. Originating in the early centuries of Christianity and developed throughout the Middle Ages, this theme was current among Old and Early Middle English religious writers, who adapted it in several homilies and poetical works. The opposition between body and soul could easily be accommodated to fit the medieval taste for disputations: thus, at a later stage, the body started answering its accuser.

Both as a homiletic topos and as a sub-genre of debate poetry, which enjoyed immense popularity in the Middle Ages, the English tradition of the 'Soul and Body' theme has often been the object of scholarly attention. The manuscript evidence, the literary genres involved, and the variety of related texts all testify to its enduring popularity from the tenth to the fifteenth century. Although the debate genre faded after the Middle Ages, the theme of the contrast between body and soul remained a source of inspiration for poets of the Renaissance such as Andrew Marvell (*A Dialogue between the Soul and the Body*), William Crashaw (*The Complaint or Dialogue betwixt the Soule and the Bodie of a Damned Man*) and the unknown author of *St Bernard's Vision (As I Lay Slumbring in My Bed One Night)*.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> On the 'Soul and Body' poems of the seventeenth century, see Rosalie Osmond, 'Body and Soul Dialogues in the Seventeenth Century', *English Literary Renaissance*, 4.3 (1974), 364-403. For a discussion of Marvell's poem in the context of the debates of the soul and the body, see Michel-André Bossy, 'Medieval Debates of Body and Soul', *Comparative Literature*, 28.2 (1976), 144-63, at pp. 160-63. On *As I Lay Slumbring in my Bed One Night*, see Francis James

Following both the Romantic interest in the ‘literature of origins’ and the emergence of Germanic Philology with its interest in the history of the language, nineteenth-century collections of early English texts often included various ‘Soul and Body’ works. Conybeare’s *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (1826)<sup>2</sup> contains the first editions of the Exeter version of the Old English *Soul and Body* poem (which Conybeare called *Soul’s Complaint*) and of *The Grave* (called *Norman-Saxon Fragment on Death*). Benjamin Thorpe worked on editions of both the *Exeter Book*<sup>3</sup> and the *Vercelli Book*,<sup>4</sup> while his *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica*<sup>5</sup> collected Old and Middle English poems and homilies, including *The Grave*. Thomas Wright’s *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes*<sup>6</sup> provided editions, used for more than a century, of the *Visio Philiberti*, *Un samedi par nuit*, *In a Thestri Stude I Stod*, and *Als I Lay in a Winteris Nyt*. All these poems (with references to dates and manuscripts) will be given fuller introductions in the chapters below.

At first, scholarly interest in the ‘Soul and Body’ theme mainly concerned the major poems (*Soul and Body*, *Als I Lay in a Winteris Nyt*, and the Latin

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Child, *The Debate of the Body and the Soul*, with an introduction by Robert L. Kittredge (Boston, MA: R.E. Lee Company, 1908), pp. ix-x.

<sup>2</sup> John Josias Conybeare, ed., *Illustrations of Anglo-Saxon Poetry* (London: Harding and Lepard, 1826).

<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Thorpe, ed., *Codex Exoniensis. A Collection of Anglo-Saxon Poetry, from a Manuscript in the Library of the Dean and Chapter of Exeter* (London: Published for the Society of Antiquaries of London by William Pickering, 1842).

<sup>4</sup> Thorpe’s edition of the *Vercelli Book* was based on a previous transcription made by C. Maier; it was printed in 1836 but published only in 1869, with a very limited circulation, in Benjamin Thorpe, ed., *Appendix B to Mr. Cooper’s Report on Rhymer’s Foedera* (London: The Record Commission, 1869, ptd 1836).

<sup>5</sup> Benjamin Thorpe, ed., *Analecta Anglo-Saxonica* (London: John and Arthur Arch, 1834).

<sup>6</sup> Thomas Wright, ed., *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes* (London: Camden Society, 1841).

*Visio Philiberti*) and the origins of the theme. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, classic studies were conducted by Wilhelm Linow<sup>7</sup> and especially by Gustav Kleinert,<sup>8</sup> whose thesis regarding an English origin of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature has been criticized by subsequent contributions.<sup>9</sup>

Theodor Batiouchkof’s article, ‘Le Débat de l’Ame et du Corps’ (1891) marked a turning point in the ‘Soul and Body’ scholarship. According to this study, which remains of fundamental importance, the origins of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature are to be found in an ancient legend where the parting soul speaks to its body at the time of death. He argues that the main sources of this legend are a tale attributed to St Macarius and the apocryphal *Visio Pauli*. In his work, Batiouchkof also prints a Latin version of the tale of Macarius, the so-called *Nonantola Version*.<sup>10</sup> Julius Zupitza and Louise Dudley then published two studies on the *Nonantola Version* and its Old English-related texts.<sup>11</sup> Dudley also continued the investigation of the origins of the theme, suggesting that the ‘Soul and Body’ legend bears traces of ancient Egyptian beliefs.<sup>12</sup> Meanwhile, the investigation into the *Visio Pauli* by Montague Rhodes James and Theodore Silverstein provided new and important textual

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<sup>7</sup> Wilhelm Linow, *De Desputisoun bitwen þe Bodi and þe Soule*, Erlanger Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie, 1 (Erlangen and Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1889).

<sup>8</sup> Gustav Kleinert, *Über den Streit zwischen Leib und Seele. Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Visio Philiberti* (Halle: Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 1880).

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Douglas Moffat, ed., *The Old English Soul and Body* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1990), p. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Theodor Batiouchkof, ‘Le Débat de l’Ame et du Corps’, *Romania*, 20 (1891), 1-55, 513-78.

<sup>11</sup> Julius Zupitza, ‘Zu Seele und Leib’, in *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, ed. by Stefan Waetzoldt and Julius Zupitza, vol. 91 (Braunschweig: George Westermann, 1893), pp. 369-404; Louise Dudley, ‘An Early Homily on the Body and Soul Theme’, *JEGP*, 8 (1909), 225-53.

<sup>12</sup> Louise Dudley, *The Egyptian Elements in the Legend of the Body and Soul*, Bryn Mawr Monographs, 8 (Baltimore, MD: J.H. Furst, 1911).

evidence for Batiouchkof's theories.<sup>13</sup>

In the 1930s, Rudolph Willard and Eleanor Kellogg Heningham published two standard treatments of the theme. Willard's article, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body' (1935), increased existing knowledge concerning the apocryphal influence on 'Soul and Body' literature, while offering new textual resources.<sup>14</sup> Heningham (1937) discovered and edited a Latin poem, known as the *Royal Debate*, which represents the earliest known stage of the debate form and served as a source for later Latin and vernacular disputes.<sup>15</sup> Heningham's contribution, which can be considered the last landmark study on the origins and sources of the theme, also inspired a number of new critical works devoted to medieval debate form.<sup>16</sup>

In the second half of the twentieth century, new analysis and interpretations of the 'Soul and Body' texts appeared, especially focused on the Old English *Soul and Body* poem.<sup>17</sup> New editions have also been published over the last decades; the critical editions of *The Worcester Fragments* and of the Old English *Soul and Body* by Douglas Moffat offer an essential background to

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<sup>13</sup> See Montague Rhodes James, ed., *Apocrypha Anecdota. A Collection of Thirteen Apocryphal Books and Fragments* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1893); Theodore Silverstein, ed., *Visio Sancti Pauli: The History of the Apocalypse in Latin together with Nine Texts* (London: Christophers, 1935).

<sup>14</sup> Rudolph Willard, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body', *PMLA*, 50.4 (1935), 957-83.

<sup>15</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Heningham, *An Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul preserved in MS Royal 7 A III in the British Museum* (Doctoral thesis, New York University, 1937).

<sup>16</sup> See especially Robert W. Ackerman, 'The Debate of the Body and the Soul and Parochial Christianity', *Speculum*, 37.4 (Oct. 1962), 541-65; Bossy, 144-63.

<sup>17</sup> See, for example, Cyril L. Smetana, 'Second Thoughts on *Soul and Body I*', *Mediaeval Studies*, 29 (1967), 193-205; Mary Heyward Ferguson, 'The Structure of the "Soul's Address to the Body" in Old English', *JEGP*, 69.1 (1970), 72-80; Allen J. Frantzen, 'The Body in *Soul and Body I*', *The Chaucer Review*, 17.1 (1982), 76-88. See Chapter 1.3 for a list of the studies on the poem.

the present work.<sup>18</sup> The anthology of Middle English debate poems edited by John W. Conlee provides an accessible edition and notes for the vernacular debates between the body and the soul discussed in this dissertation.<sup>19</sup>

Recent studies of the theme include interpretations of ‘Soul and Body’ debates in the context of gender studies,<sup>20</sup> analysis of the poetical corpus,<sup>21</sup> an interpretation of the Anglo-Saxon self in the *Vercelli Book*,<sup>22</sup> and studies on ‘Soul and Body’ debates in the wider European context.<sup>23</sup> The dissertation by Justin J. Brent<sup>24</sup> is particularly worthy of consideration because it offers the most recent attempt at a comprehensive treatment of the theme.

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<sup>18</sup> Douglas Moffat, ed., *The Soul's Address to the Body. The Worcester Fragments* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1987); *The Old English Soul and Body*, cit., 1990.

<sup>19</sup> John W. Conlee, ed., *Middle English Debate Poetry. A Critical Anthology* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991)

<sup>20</sup> See Masha Raskolnikov, Masha, *Body against Soul: Gender and Sowlehele in Middle English Allegory* (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2009); Wendy Matlock, ‘Irreconcilable Differences: Law, Gender, and Judgment in Middle English Debate Poetry’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 2003).

<sup>21</sup> See Mary Patricia Tuck, *A Study of Body-and-Soul Poetry in Old and Middle English* (unpublished doctoral thesis, North Texas State University, 1979); Eve E. Siebert, ‘Body and Soul Poems in Old and Middle English’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Saint Louis University, 2008).

<sup>22</sup> See Amity Alissa Reading, ‘Soul and Body: Reading the Anglo-Saxon Self through the Vercelli Book’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2009).

<sup>23</sup> See Emily J. Richards, ‘Body-Soul Debates in English, French and German Manuscripts, c.1200-c.1500’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2009); Helen Fulton, ‘Body and Soul: from Doctrine to Debate in medieval Welsh and Irish Literature’, in *Sanctity as Literature in late medieval Britain*, ed. by Eva Von Contzen and Anke Bernau (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), pp. 96-115.

<sup>24</sup> Justin J. Brent, ‘The Legend of Soul and Body in Medieval England’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, State University of New York, 2000).

## I.2. AIMS AND METHOD

The main aim of this study is to provide a literary history of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme in medieval England, in works composed in Old English, Middle English, and Latin. I shall outline the development of the theme on the basis of the extant texts, discussing their known sources and analysing how other literary works of different genres have influenced the evolution of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme across the centuries.

The pivotal contributions of the nineteenth and early twentieth century did not take account of several related texts which have slowly come to light; on the other hand, the most recent discussions, though at times remarkable, have often focused on a single text or on a particular aspect of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme (aesthetic features, rhetoric, theology, etc.). By giving a fuller picture of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature, I hope to fill a gap in current scholarship. My study aims a) to provide a more comprehensive analysis of the heterogeneous and diverse Old English tradition; b) to highlight the importance of the Early Middle English period as the phase in which the ‘Soul and Body’ theme became a literary sub-genre with definite features; c) to discuss the different rhetorical strategies that informed the Middle English debates of the Body and the Soul. As I hope to show in due course, this research also proposes new sources, interpretations, and evaluations of some passages of texts belonging to the ‘Soul and Body’ *corpus*, as well as suggesting new fields of investigation on some related topics. In this respect, Rosemary Woolf’s book on the English religious lyric of the Middle Ages has offered not only an invaluable scholarly background, but also a useful

methodological model for my study.<sup>25</sup>

My methodology is based on the study of literary motifs, which can be regarded as recurring narrative elements that give shape to a large literary theme (in the present case, the ‘Soul and Body’ theme). This approach is largely dependent on the discussion of *topoi* in Curtius’ landmark work on European literature and medieval Latinity.<sup>26</sup> In the context of vernacular literature, this approach has been taken up by Bruckner, whose concept of motifs as small ‘narrative units’ into which a large narrative structure can be divided is adopted in the present dissertation.<sup>27</sup> Scholarly discussions on specific motifs such as that of the *ubi sunt* or the *signa mortis* have also provided some essential background to the present discussion.<sup>28</sup>

In medieval England, the ‘Soul and Body’ theme is first recorded as a penitential topos that includes some recurring motifs: there are conventionalised temporal settings in which the soul seeks its body to rebuke it; the *ubi sunt* motif; the emphasis on specific sins such as pride and gluttony; the signs of approaching death; the theme of the decomposition of the body; and the portrait of the sinner. These motifs, as will be shown, change across

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<sup>25</sup> Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

<sup>26</sup> Ernst Robert Curtius, *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, translated by Willard R. Trask with a new introduction by Colin Burrow (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, new edition, 2013).

<sup>27</sup> See Matilda T. Bruckner, *Narrative Invention in Twelfth-Century French Romance: the Convention of Hospitality (1160-1200)* (Lexington, KY: French Forum, 1980), pp. 7-12.

<sup>28</sup> On the *ubi sunt* motif, see James E. Cross, ‘*Ubi sunt* passages in Old English: sources and relationships’, *Vetenskaps-Societeten i Lund Årsbok* (1956), 23-44; Claudia Di Sciacca, ‘The *Ubi Sunt* Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies: Sources and Relationships’, *JEGP*, 105.3 (2006), 365-87. On the ‘Signs of Death’, see Rossell Hope Robbins, ‘Signs of Death in Middle English’, *Mediaeval Studies*, 32 (1970), 282-98. A discussion on several motifs recurring in ‘Soul and Body’ poetry is in Tuck, pp. 131-222.



the centuries; it is my firm belief that a study of their manifestations and evolution, based on the sources and analogues that have influenced their development, will allow me to outline a literary history of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme from the tenth to the fifteenth century.

### I.3. STRUCTURE OF THE DISSERTATION

The basic structure of the thesis is chronological, beginning with the earliest material. However, as I shall discuss in Chapter 1.1, dates of manuscripts are not always a reliable guide to the literary development of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme.<sup>29</sup> The dissertation is divided into three chapters, corresponding to three main literary phases: Old English, early Middle English (from the early twelfth to the late thirteenth century), and later Middle English (from the late thirteenth to the fifteenth century). Vernacular English texts mentioned in the following sections are fully discussed in the chapters of the dissertation. These vernacular texts, and especially those from the Middle English phase, cannot be considered in isolation from their Anglo-Norman and Latin analogues,

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<sup>29</sup> Dates of manuscripts containing Old English are taken from Neil R. Ker, *Catalogue of Manuscripts containing Anglo-Saxon* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957; reissued 1990) (for each manuscript, I give the entry number from Ker’s *Catalogue*). Dates of post-Conquest manuscripts containing English (1060 to 1220) are taken from Orietta Da Rold, Takako Kato, Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne, eds, *The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220* (Leicester: University of Leicester 2010-2013), available at <[www.le.ac.uk/ee/em1060to1220/index.html](http://www.le.ac.uk/ee/em1060to1220/index.html)>, unless otherwise indicated. Dates of manuscripts containing Latin are quoted from the referenced editions. Dates of manuscripts containing Middle English are quoted from Michael Benskin, Margaret Laing, Vasilis Karaiskos, and Keith Williamson, *An Electronic Version of A Linguistic Atlas of Late Mediaeval English (eLALME)* (Edinburgh: The Authors and the University of Edinburgh, 2013-2018), available at <[www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme.html](http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/elalme/elalme.html)> (for each manuscript, I give the LALME LP number), unless otherwise indicated.

which will therefore also be discussed.

In the first chapter, on Old English literature, I shall propose a subdivision of the topos of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' into three different 'types'. This subdivision, I believe, clarifies the textual relationships among the texts, suggesting both a possible line of development of the 'Soul and Body' theme in the Anglo-Saxon period, and a relative chronology. As I shall argue, a group of homilies constitutes a dominant 'type' which influenced contemporary and later developments of the theme. In this context, I shall also analyse the twenty-second Vercelli Homily, which has only recently been suggested as belonging to the 'Soul and Body' theme.<sup>30</sup>

The second chapter will be devoted to the study of a *corpus* of texts, dating from the twelfth to the thirteenth centuries, in which the 'Soul's Address' topos came to include new, contemporary motifs related to the wider context of lyrics on death. In this phase, roughly corresponding to the chronological boundaries of Early Middle English literature, the topos was developed by unknown vernacular authors into a more structured and organized literary sub-genre. This development, as suggested by Woolf, was probably influenced by contemporary lyrics on death.<sup>31</sup> As I shall discuss, the texts of this phase show that authors of the period were turning the 'Soul and Body' theme into a well-defined literary tradition, as shown by the fact that English texts were influencing each other. Particular attention will be given to the Trinity Homily XXIX, *De Sancto Andrea*, which despite having been neglected by scholars can be considered an important link between the previous Old English tradition and contemporary literary tendencies.

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<sup>30</sup> See Di Sciacca, 376-78; Samantha Zacher, *Preaching the Converted. The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies*, Toronto Anglo-Saxon Series, 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), pp. 140-78.

<sup>31</sup> See Woolf, p. 93.

The third and final chapter will deal with the Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ debate poems. This tradition differs somewhat from the earlier ‘Soul’s Address’, and is more dependent on the wider medieval literary genre of the literary debates. I shall first discuss the two major Latin sources for the Middle English poems (the *Royal Debate* and the *Visio Philiberti*). As I aim to demonstrate, these two works descend from two different rhetorical structures: that of the *declamatio* in the case of the *Royal Debate*, and that of the *disputatio* in the case of the *Visio Philiberti*. I shall then take into account the Anglo-Norman ‘Soul and Body’ tradition stemming from these Latin works. The following part of the chapter will consider the elements of innovation in the Middle English vernacular debates, with a focus on *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyte*, widely regarded as the masterpiece of the ‘Soul and Body’ literary sub-genre. I shall also propose that this latter poem may have inspired *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*, which, in turn, is unlikely to rely on any Latin source. The last section of the third chapter will consider the last, fifteenth-century vernacular examples of debates related to the ‘Soul and Body’ theme.

To correctly frame the medieval English corpus, I begin by briefly discussing the origins of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme, which have been traced back to the Mediterranean area by scholars.

#### I.4. THE MEDITERRANEAN LEGEND

With regards to its origins, the ‘Soul and Body’ theme can be considered a complex constellation and reworking of philosophical ideas, unorthodox Christian beliefs, and folk tales, all merging into each other.

The earliest examples of literary debates between the body and the soul as

hostile entities are written in Sumerian around the third millennium BC.<sup>32</sup> Ancient Greek philosophers like Pythagoras and Plato also treated the body and soul as antithetical entities.<sup>33</sup> However, the so-called ‘Soul and Body Legend’,<sup>34</sup> from which the Old and Early Middle English literary treatments descend, belongs to a somewhat different tradition, probably developed from a simple literary episode of a farewell from the soul to its body at the moment of death.<sup>35</sup> In its essential traits, this legend, as reconstructed by scholars, consists of the tale of a monk who witnesses the deaths of a righteous and a wicked man. The righteous soul is gently taken away by angels, whereas the wicked soul is roughly seized and pricked by demons. Both souls then separately embark on a tour of the otherworld and visit their future dwellings.

Louise Dudley has investigated the possibility of an Egyptian background for this legend, suggesting that, in its original form, it could have been influenced by early Egyptian beliefs about the fate of the soul after death; these beliefs, at a later stage, supposedly informed several Coptic texts. According to Dudley, the legend was then translated into Greek and then into Latin, eventually spreading into the West.<sup>36</sup> Her study, of undoubted importance, lacks, however, some decisive textual evidence (‘there are no extant texts from Egypt which can be regarded as the definite literary sources of the earliest versions of the legend’).<sup>37</sup> A noteworthy work is the *Dialogue*

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<sup>32</sup> See Sebastian P. Brock, ‘The Dispute between Soul and Body: An Example of a Long-Lived Mesopotamian Literary Genre’, *Aram*, 1 (1989), 53-64; Zacher, p. 142.

<sup>33</sup> Cf. Michelle Hoek, ‘Violence and ideological inversion in the Old English *Soul’s Address to the Body*’, *Exemplaria*, 10.2 (1998), 271-85, at pp. 272-73.

<sup>34</sup> The term ‘Legend’, adopted in the present study, has often been used in the ‘Soul and Body’ scholarship (for example, by Batiouchkof and Dudley).

<sup>35</sup> Dudley, pp. 104-10.

<sup>36</sup> Dudley, pp. 8-9.

<sup>37</sup> Dudley, p. 9. This point has also recently been noted by Brent, pp. 14-16.

of a Man and his Soul, preserved in a late Twelfth Dynasty manuscript (ca. 1800 BC).<sup>38</sup> Although Brent states that this debate ‘gives voice to several of the medieval death themes’,<sup>39</sup> I find both the treatment and the debate structure quite different from the medieval tradition.<sup>40</sup> The *Dialogue of a Man and his Soul* sets out a dispute between a man and his *ba*, ‘which is one aspect of the personality, and the manifestation of a person after death’.<sup>41</sup> In the dispute (conducted while the man is still alive), the man is longing to reach the otherworld (the ‘West’), while his *ba* warns him of the painful nature of death: ‘strikingly, it is the soul that praises this life, while the living man extols life after death. The soul presents a less orthodox view, and is less formal in speech’.<sup>42</sup> As will be shown in Chapter 3, all of these elements are incompatible with the debate tradition discussed in this study.

In his above-mentioned dissertation, Brent has also identified some similarities between the ‘Soul and Body’ Legend and Zoroastrian beliefs.<sup>43</sup> It is obviously impossible to deal adequately with the many different conceptions of the separation of the soul from the body over many centuries and in such a wide and diverse area. For the present purposes, I confine myself to hard textual evidence. From this evidence, it appears that it would be safer to talk of ‘Mediterranean’ roots, given that many analogous concepts originated from the Coptic culture (rather than ancient Egyptian), Greece, and

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<sup>38</sup> A recent translation, with notes, is printed in Richard B. Parkinson, ed. and trans., *The Tale of Sinuhe and Other Ancient Egyptian Poems* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 151-65..

<sup>39</sup> Brent, p. 133.

<sup>40</sup> Apart from the obvious consideration that more than two and a half thousand years separate the *Dialogue* from the medieval ‘soul and body’ debates.

<sup>41</sup> Parkinson, p. 151.

<sup>42</sup> Parkinson, p. 152.

<sup>43</sup> Brent, pp. 20-28.

the Fertile Crescent extending from Israel to the Persian Gulf. In this 'Mediterranean' context, Syriac literature is of particular interest. A farewell of the soul to the body, as noted both by Dudley and Batiouchkof,<sup>44</sup> is found in two of the *Necrosima*, a collection of funeral hymns attributed to Ephrem Syrus (fourth century).<sup>45</sup> In *Canon LIX*, devils and angels contend for the soul of a dead man; this soul speaks words of regret to the 'most faithful companion' (the body) it has to leave because of death, in a manner not dissimilar to the speeches of the Blessed Souls of the later Latin tradition. Notably, the body replies, wishing the soul soundness and safety.<sup>46</sup> In *Canon LXXXI*, a soul greets the 'beloved dwelling' granted from God, but there is no reply from the body.<sup>47</sup> Overall, the relationship between body and soul in these two *Necrosima* is not one of opposition; rather, there is a sense of terror in anticipation of death and a sense of affection for the spirit's mortal remains. Disputes between the body and the soul were also common in Syriac literature. A reference in Ephrem's *Carmina Nisibena* 69.5 indicates the existence of a debate where soul and body argue 'to see which caused the other to sin'.<sup>48</sup> Brock notes that around fifty known Syriac verse disputes between different

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<sup>44</sup> Batiouchkof, pp. 11-12; Dudley, pp. 104-09, 161-63.

<sup>45</sup> See Sebastian P. Brock, 'St. Ephrem: A Brief Guide to the Main Editions and Translations', 2012, in *Syri.ac. An Annotated Bibliography of Syriac Resources Online*, ed. by Scott Johnson, Morgan Reed, and Jack Tannous (University of Oklahoma and Princeton University, 2018), <<http://syri.ac/brock/ephrem>>, last accessed October 2018.

<sup>46</sup> Edition in Stefano Evodio Assemani, ed., *Sancti Patris Nostri Ephraem Syri Opera Omnia*, 3 vols (Roma: Tipografia Pontificia Vaticana, 1743), I, pp. 325-26.

<sup>47</sup> Edition in Assemani, pp. 355-56.

<sup>48</sup> Sebastian P. Brock, 'Syriac Dialogue Poems: Marginalia to a Recent Edition', *Le Muséon*, 97 (1984), 29-58, at p. 49. See also Han J.W. Drijvers, 'Body and Soul: A Perennial Problem', in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East*, ed. by Gerrit J. Reinink and Herman L.J. Vanstiphout (Leuven: Peeters, 1991), pp. 121-34, at p. 123.

contenders (the months of the year, Grace and Justice, the Cup and the Wine, etc.) are preserved in manuscripts from the ninth to the thirteenth century, but were probably composed between the fourth and the twelfth century.<sup>49</sup> Among these poems, we currently know of four disputes of the body and the soul.<sup>50</sup> The similarity between the structure of the Syriac verse contest and that of the later, medieval Latin debate poetry is especially striking:

First there comes a short introduction, which provides the setting, and sometimes also specifies who is acting as judge between the two disputants; then comes the contest proper, where the disputants speak in alternate stanzas or verses; this section constitutes the major part of the poem. Finally there is the adjudication, where the judge pronounces which of the disputants in [*sic*] the winner (sometimes neither is).<sup>51</sup>

Most disputes between the body and the soul in Syriac literature are thematically close to the later Western Latin examples (each disputant blames the other ‘for all the sinful and wrong actions committed during the Body’s lifetime’),<sup>52</sup> but framed by a different setting (the usual Syriac framework is that of the Last Judgment, whereas, as discussed in Chapter 3, the medieval Latin poetry favours a post-mortem visionary context). Three of the known Syriac ‘Soul and Body’ disputes (*Body and Soul I*, *Body and Soul II*, *Body and Soul III*) feature ‘a real struggle between the two’, whereas, in a fourth poem

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<sup>49</sup> Brock, p. 35. For an overview and editions see Id., ‘Syriac Dispute Poems: The various Types’, in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East*, ed. by Gerrit J. Reinink and Herman L.J. Vanstiphout (Leuven: Peeters, 1991), pp. 109-19.

<sup>50</sup> See Brock, ‘The Dispute between Soul and Body’, pp. 55-57; a translation of one of these poems, from about the sixth century (*Body and Soul I*), is at pp. 58-63. See also Id., ‘Syriac Dialogue Poems’, pp. 49-50.

<sup>51</sup> Brock, ‘The Dispute between Soul and Body’, p. 53; see also Id., ‘Syriac Dialogue Poems’, p. 31.

<sup>52</sup> Brock, ‘The Dispute between Soul and Body’, p. 57.

(*Body and Soul IV*), ‘the two parties are less opponents who lay blame upon each other [...] than companions united in sorrow and fear for death and God’s judgment’.<sup>53</sup> It is doubtful if and how these poems could have influenced the medieval Latin tradition. Brock argues that European culture ‘may indeed have inherited the Mesopotamian genre of the contest poem through Muslim Spain’,<sup>54</sup> the Syriac literature being an intermediate phase of this chain; nonetheless, the question is still debated by scholars.<sup>55</sup>

However, the tradition in which a soul blames its body without a reply, particular to a group of Latin homilies that were then adapted and developed in several Old and Early Middle English texts, has been traced back by scholars to a different point of origin, that of the motif of the separation of the soul from the body at the point of death. This motif is related to apocrypha and homiletic tales developed around the figures of St Macarius and St Paul.

## I.5. THE TALE OF ST MACARIUS OF ALEXANDRIA

‘Il semble que ce solitaire devint bientôt le personnage favori des légendes sur

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<sup>53</sup> Drijvers, pp. 124-24. An analysis and translation of *Body and Soul IV* is at pp. 124-34.

<sup>54</sup> Brock, p. 64. On this theme, see Silvestro Fiore, ‘La tenson en Espagne et en Babylonie: évolution ou polygénèse?’, in *Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, Fribourg, 1964*, ed. by François Jost (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), pp. 982-92.

<sup>55</sup> For an overview, see a recent contribution by Enrique Jiménez, *The Babylonian Disputation Poems. With Editions of the Series of the Poplar, Palm and Vine, the Series of the Spider, and the Story of the Poor, Forlorn Wren*, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East, 87 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 125-53. An influence of Syriac disputes on Byzantine Greek literary forms such as the *kovtákia* and the so-called ‘dramatic homilies’ has also been proposed; see Averil Cameron, ‘Disputations, Polemical Literature and the Formation of Opinion in the early Byzantine Period’, in *Dispute Poems and Dialogues in the Ancient and Mediaeval Near East*, ed. by Gerrit J. Reinink and Herman L.J. Vanstiphout (Leuven: Peeters, 1991), pp. 91-10.



des visions d'outre-tombe'<sup>56</sup> ('it looks as if this hermit soon became the favourite character of the visions of the otherworld'): this statement by Theodor Batiouchkof shows the importance accorded by scholars to St Macarius. In fact, the name 'Macarius' refers to several figures of fourth-century Christian ascetic movement and, in particular, to two 'desert fathers': Macarius of Egypt, also known as Macarius the Great, and his younger contemporary Macarius of Alexandria. In our sources, these two figures were sometimes confused or conflated,<sup>57</sup> presumably because the theme of the post-mortem fate of the soul features in several writings ascribed to them. Macarius of Egypt was formerly associated with a corpus of homilies, the Fifty Spiritual Homilies, which shows the influence of Syrian Christian literature;<sup>58</sup> it is now assumed that the 'Macarius' who wrote the Fifty Spiritual Homilies was not Macarius of Egypt, but a Syrian monk, well acquainted with both Hellenistic culture and Syrian Christian writers such as Ephrem.<sup>59</sup> The twenty-second homily of this corpus, *Περὶ δισσοῆς στάσεως τῶν ἐκ τοῦ βίου τοῦτοι ἐξερχόντων* ('On the twofold condition of those who exit this life'), deals with the different ways in which the souls of the righteous and the wicked are separated from

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<sup>56</sup> Batiouchkof, p. 15. Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>57</sup> See Batiouchkof, p. 15.

<sup>58</sup> On Macarius of Egypt see A.J. Mason, *Fifty Spiritual Homilies of St Macarius the Egyptian* (London: SPCK, 1921), pp. v-xliv.

<sup>59</sup> See George A. Maloney, transl. and ed., *Pseudo-Macarius. The Fifty Spiritual Homilies and the Great Letter*, with a preface by Kallistos Ware, Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 1992), pp. 3-27; Jill Gather, *Teachings on the Prayer of the Heart in the Greek and Syrian Fathers* (unpublished doctoral thesis, Union Theological Seminary, New York), pp. 111-15.

the body.<sup>60</sup> Amongst the other legends related to the figure of Macarius, Batiouchkof cites a “Vision of the Holy Angels” concerning a strife between angels and demons on the fate of several souls,<sup>61</sup> and the tale of Macarius and the skull, which is preserved in the *Apophthegmata* attributed to Macarius of Egypt<sup>62</sup> and in the thirteenth-century *Legenda Aurea*.<sup>63</sup> In the tale of the skull, Macarius finds the skull of a pagan priest; the skull answers Macarius’ questions about hell and its inhabitants. In John Cassian’s *Conlationes*, XV.3, Macarius is said to have resurrected a dead man.<sup>64</sup> Scholars, including Batiouchkof, have stressed the importance of a surviving homiletic tale in which Macarius of Alexandria is the main character, but whose author is supposedly one of his pupils, Alexander the Ascetic:<sup>65</sup> the text, *Τοῦ Ἁγίου Μακαρίου τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως λόγος περὶ ἐξόδου ψυχῆς δικαίων καὶ ἀμαρτωλῶν* (‘Macarius of Alexandria’s sermon on the exit of the souls of the righteous and the wicked’),<sup>66</sup> is preserved in several manuscripts.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Macarius of Egypt, *Homiliae*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 161 vols (Paris: Garnier, 1857-1866), xxxiv, cols 449-820 (cols. 659-60). Translation in Maloney, p. 155.

<sup>61</sup> Batiouchkof, p. 15. Edition in PG, xxxiv, cols. 221-30; see also Dudley, pp. 53-55.

<sup>62</sup> Edition in PG, xxxiv, cols. 257-60.

<sup>63</sup> Edition in Theodor Graesse, *Jacobi A Voragine Legenda aurea, vulgo historia lombardica dicta*, 3rd edition (Bratislava: Koebner, 1890), 100-02.

<sup>64</sup> See John Cassian, *Iohannis Cassiani Opera. Pars II: Iohannis Cassiani Conlationes xxiii*, ed. by Michael Petschenig, CSEL, 13 (Vienna: F. Tempsky, and Leipzig: G. Freytag, 1886), pp. 428-30.

<sup>65</sup> Batiouchkof, p. 9.

<sup>66</sup> Macarius of Alexandria (incertus), *De exitu animarum justorum et peccatorum*, in PG, xxxiv, cols. 385-95.

<sup>67</sup> Batiouchkof, p. 9, does not provide a list of the manuscripts, but refers to Fabricius’ *Bibliotheca Graeca*, in which four witnesses (plus a fifth abbreviated version) are recorded: see

In this tale, Macarius, accompanied by two angels, comes across a corpse while riding through the desert; he holds his nose because of the corpse's stench, noting that the angels are doing the same. Asked by the hermit if they are able to smell the foul odour, the two angels answer that sins produce a bad smell similar to the reek of putrefaction. There follows an explanation of the fate of the soul after death. The soul is frightened when the angels come to remove it from the body; for two days, it keeps on floating around the corpse. On the third day after death, it is brought into God's presence; on the six following days, the soul visits Paradise. If the soul belonged to a wicked man, it laments its life, which was devoted to sins and worthless worldly goods:

Οἱ μοι, πῶς ἐματαιώθην ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐκείνῳ, ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τοῦ βίου ἀσχοληθεῖσα. τὸ πλεῖστον τοῦ βίου ἐδαπάνησα ἐν ἀμελείᾳ, καὶ οὐκ ἐδούλευσα τῷ Θεῷ κατὰ τὸ πρέπον. ὅπως κἀγὼ ἡξιώθην τῆς χάριτος καὶ τῆς δόξης ταύτης. οἱ μοι τῇ ἀθλίᾳ, ἔτι μοι συμβάλλονται αἱ φροντίδες καὶ ὁ ἄκερος<sup>68</sup> περισπασμὸς ὃν εἶχον ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ. ποῦ δέ μοι χρησιμεύουσι οἱ ἀμπελῶνες, οὓς ἐφύτευσα, καὶ οἱ ελαιῶνες; ποίαν δέ μοι ὠφελείαν παρέξεται, ὃν ἐκτησάμην ἀγρόν; τί δέ μοι ὠφελεῖ τὸ [ἐθνοῦ] ἐκεῖ χρυσίον; ποῖον δέ μοι ὄφελος παρέχει ὁ πλοῦτος ἐκεῖσε; τί δέ μοι ὄνησι πᾶν τερπνὸν τοῦ βίου καὶ τοῦ κόσμου ἐκείνου.<sup>69</sup>

(Woe to me, how foolishly I acted in that world, having been occupied by the desires of life. I spent most of my life negligently and did not serve God in accordance with what was fitting, so that I would be considered worthy of grace and glory here. Woe to me, wretched one, the thoughts and inauspicious distractions I had in the world still affect me. Of what use are the vineyards and olive yards that I planted? What

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Johann Albert Fabricius, *Bibliotheca Graeca*, 14 vols (Hamburg: C. Liebezeit, 1705-1728), vii, pp. 494-95; x, pp. 473-74.

<sup>68</sup> Read *ἄκαιρος* (cf. PG, xxxiv, col. 390).

<sup>69</sup> PG, xxxiv, col. 389.

benefit will the field I acquired give me? How is the gold of men in that world of use to me? What advantage does wealth in that place give to me? How does any pleasure of life and of the world there benefit me?)<sup>70</sup>

On the ninth day, the soul is conducted again to God, and on the following thirty days the angels show it the many torments of hell. On the fortieth day, God finally states where the soul must dwell until the Last Judgment.<sup>71</sup>

This tale has contributed to shaping the ‘Soul and Body’ legend in several aspects. It provided:

1. The notion that the soul remains next to the body for some time after death;<sup>72</sup>
2. The soul’s lament;
3. The motif of the ‘tour of the otherworld’;<sup>73</sup>
4. The character of Macarius, which can be found in some subsequent Latin treatments of the tale, and is alluded to in Old English homilies.<sup>74</sup>

According to Batiouchkof, the Western adaptations of this legend show the interpolation of many similar visionary themes, the most important of which is the episode of the deaths of the righteous and the wicked of the *Visio Pauli*, or *Apocalypse of Paul*.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>70</sup> I am thankful to Hatsuko Matsuda (University of Bristol) for her help in translating this passage.

<sup>71</sup> See Batiouchkof, pp. 9-10.

<sup>72</sup> Dudley, pp. 85-89, notes that this belief could be of Persian origin.

<sup>73</sup> On this last aspect, see Dudley, pp. 74-77.

<sup>74</sup> See below, I.7, and Chapter 1.

<sup>75</sup> See Batiouchkof, p. 17. Among other analogous visions, Batiouchkof, pp. 12-15, discusses the fourteenth homily of Cyril of Alexandria, *Περὶ ἐξόδου ψυχῆς, καὶ περὶ τῆς δευτέρας παρουσίας* (‘On the going-out of soul, and on the Second Advent’). Considered by Batiouchkof to belong to a tradition independent from the tale of Macarius, this homily features the motif of

## I.6. THE ROLE OF THE APOCALYPSE OF PAUL

The *Visio Pauli*, ‘The Apocalypse of Paul’, is one of the most successful apocryphal writings of any time, whose wide and complex diffusion can be summarised only with difficulty.<sup>76</sup> Originally written in Greek in Egypt around the third century,<sup>77</sup> the *Apocalypse of Paul* was then carried to Asia Minor and reworked there.<sup>78</sup> This reworking featured a new preface meant to support the ‘authenticity’ of the text: an account of the recovery of the apocryphal book “in the consulship of Theodosius Augustus the Younger and Cynegius”,<sup>79</sup> a reference datable to c. 420, as shown by Silverstein.<sup>80</sup> This re-

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the different fates of the righteous and the wicked, a different version of the tour of the underworld, and an *ubi sunt* passage. Edition in Cyril of Alexandria, *Homiliae diversae*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 161 vols (Paris: Garnier, 1857-1866), LXXVII, cols. 982-1118 (cols. 1071-90). On this homily, see also Dudley, pp. 52-53.

<sup>76</sup> For an overview, see Antonette DiPaolo Healey, ‘Apocalypse of Paul’, in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture. The Apocrypha*, ed. by Frederick M. Briggs, Instrumenta Anglistica Mediaevalia, 1 (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), pp. 67-70. For a bibliography, see Jan N. Bremmer, ‘Bibliography of the *Visio Pauli* and the Gnostic *Apocalypse of Paul*’, in *The Visio Pauli and the Gnostic Apocalypse of Paul*, ed. by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 211-36. On the medieval English tradition, see Robert Easting, *Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature. III: Visions of the Other World in Middle English* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1997).

<sup>77</sup> Theodore Silverstein and Anthony Hilhorst, eds, *Apocalypse of Paul. A New Critical Edition of Three Long Latin Versions*, Cahiers d’orientalisme, 21 (Geneva: P. Cramer, 1997), p. 11.

<sup>78</sup> Silverstein and Hilhorst, p. 11.

<sup>79</sup> Translation by Anthony Hilhorst, ‘The *Apocalypse of Paul*: Previous History and Afterlife’, in *The Visio Pauli and the Gnostic Apocalypse of Paul*, ed. by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 1-22, at p. 4.

<sup>80</sup> See Theodore Silverstein, ‘The Date of the *Apocalypse of Paul*’, *Mediaeval Studies*, 24 (1962), 335-48; Silverstein and Hilhorst, p. 11.

edited text was then translated into Latin, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic, Arabic, Church Slavonic, and Ethiopic.<sup>81</sup> These versions survive in a number of manuscripts from the eighth to the seventeenth century.<sup>82</sup> Tischendorf edited a Greek version, possibly descending from the lost original<sup>83</sup> – although characterised by ‘considerable abbreviation and occasional interpolation’<sup>84</sup> – while James first printed what he called the ‘complete Latin version of the book’,<sup>85</sup> found in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Nouv. acq. Lat. 1631, from the ninth century. The text in MS Nouv. acq. Lat. 1631 is regarded as being ‘the fullest account of the vision’<sup>86</sup> and ‘the best witness to the original’;<sup>87</sup> it is one of the versions of the *Visio Pauli* known as ‘Long Latin’. Three Long Latin versions, preserved in seven manuscripts, survives to date.<sup>88</sup>

The *Apocalypse of Paul* was inspired by the episode of the visit to the third

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<sup>81</sup> Hilhorst, ‘The *Apocalypse of Paul*: Previous History and Afterlife’, p. 3.

<sup>82</sup> The oldest Latin manuscripts date back to the eighth century, but the translation is probably earlier, from the sixth century. See Silverstein, ‘*Visio Sancti Pauli*’, pp. 5-6.

<sup>83</sup> Constantin Von Tischendorf, ed., *Apocalypses apocryphae Mosis, Esdrae, Pauli, Iohannis: item Mariae dormitio, additis Evangeliorum et actuum Apocryphorum supplementis* (Leipzig: H. Mendelssohn, 1866), pp. 34-69.

<sup>84</sup> Silverstein, p. 15.

<sup>85</sup> James, p. 2. The edition of the Long Latin version is at pp. 11-42.

<sup>86</sup> DiPaolo Healey, p. 67.

<sup>87</sup> Hilhorst, p. 4. According to Hogeterp, the Greek abbreviated, the Long Latin versions, the incomplete Coptic version and the Syriac text are close to the original, while the Armenian, Arabic, Church Slavonic, and Georgian versions are more dependent on the other translations: see Albert L.A. Hogeterp, ‘The Relation between Body and Soul in the *Apocalypse of Paul*’, in *The Visio Pauli and the Gnostic Apocalypse of Paul*, ed. by Jan N. Bremmer and István Czachesz (Leuven: Peeters, 2007), pp. 105-29, at p. 106.

<sup>88</sup> A critical edition of the three Long Latin versions is in Silverstein and Hilhorst (1997).

heaven found in 2 Corinthians 12:2-4,<sup>89</sup> a mention of which opens the text.<sup>90</sup> Based on apocryphal visions such as the apocalypses of Peter, Elias and Zephaniah, and thematically related to the Macarian material,<sup>91</sup> the *Apocalypse of Paul* enjoyed a wide and enduring success for a millennium, in spite of the frequent accusations of unorthodoxy, such as the one made by Augustine.<sup>92</sup> The reason for this success is, in Silverstein's words, that the *Apocalypse of Paul* is the first revelation 'all compact':<sup>93</sup> focused as it is on the fate of the soul after death, it 'must have exercised on the popular conceptions of the other-world an influence far more deep-seated than that which is manifest from mere quotation and adaptation'.<sup>94</sup> Due to the popularity enjoyed by the *Apocalypse of Paul*, a large number of abbreviated Latin versions (known as *Redactions*) were composed between the tenth and the twelfth century<sup>95</sup> and then translated into many vernacular languages, including English.<sup>96</sup>

The core narration of the Long Latin *Visio Pauli* is shaped by the episodes

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<sup>89</sup> See Vernon K. Robbins, 'The Legacy of 2 Corinthians 12:2-4 in the *Apocalypse of Paul*', in *Paul and the Corinthians: Studies on a Community in Conflict. Essays in Honour of Margaret Thrall*, ed. by Trevor J. Burke and J. Keith Elliott (Brill: Leiden and Boston, MA, 2003), pp. 327-39; Ananya J. Kabir, *Paradise, Death and Doomsday in Anglo-Saxon Literature*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 32 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 14-23.

<sup>90</sup> See DiPaolo Healey, p. 68.

<sup>91</sup> Silverstein, p. 3.

<sup>92</sup> See Kabir, p. 23; Silverstein, pp. 3-5.

<sup>93</sup> Silverstein, p. 12.

<sup>94</sup> Silverstein, p. 12.

<sup>95</sup> Silverstein, p. 12.

<sup>96</sup> Scholars have identified eleven *Redactions*: see DiPaolo Healey, p. 68. The main *Redactions* are printed in Silverstein (1935), except for *Redaction IV*, printed in Herman Brandes, ed., *Visio S. Pauli. Ein Beitrag zur Visionsliteratur* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1885), pp. 75-80.

of the deaths and judgments of the righteous and the wicked (Long Latin, chapters 11-18), of the two visions of Paradise (chapters 19-30 and 45-51 respectively) and of the vision of Hell (chapters 31-44).<sup>97</sup> In the fourteenth chapter, a parting righteous soul is gently received by angels, who ask it to behold and reflect on its former body. In the following chapter, the death of the wicked is accompanied by the scene of the evil angels who seize the damned soul and show it the sins committed in life; the exclamation ‘*Melius erat ei si non fuisset natus*’<sup>98</sup> (“It would have been better for it [the soul] if it had not been born”) will become a constant feature of the ‘Soul and Body’ tradition. Then the evil angels urge the damned soul to look at the corpse from which it emerged: ‘*O misera anima, prospice carnem tuam et cognosce domum tuam unde existi. Necesse est enim te reuertere in carne tua in diem resurrectionis, ut recipias peccatis tuis condignum et impietatum tuarum*’,<sup>99</sup> “O wretched soul, look at your flesh and consider the house you exited. You shall indeed go back into your flesh at the day of resurrection to receive the due reward for your sins and for your impieties”. These passages are considered by scholars to be of key importance for the formation and development of the ‘Soul and Body’ legend.<sup>100</sup>

During his visit to Hell, Paul, moved by the vision of the torments suffered by the lost souls, obtains from Jesus a day of release from pains for them: ‘*in die enim qua resurrexi a mortuis dono vobis omnibus qui estis in penis noctem*

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<sup>97</sup> A brief summary of the Long Latin version is in Montague Rhodes James, ed., *The Apocryphal New Testament. Being the Apocryphal Gospels, Acts, Epistles, and Apocalypses* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924), p. 526 (a translation is given at pp. 526-55).

<sup>98</sup> Silverstein and Hilhorst, p. 96, l. 12. All quotations from the Long Latin version of the *Apocalypse of Paul* are from the text preserved in Paris, MS Nouv. acq. Lat. 1631, edited by Silverstein and Hilhorst.

<sup>99</sup> Silverstein and Hilhorst, p. 96, ll.18-23.

<sup>100</sup> See especially Batiuchkof, pp. 17-38; Silverstein, p. 12; DiPaolo Healey, p. 69.



et diem refrigerium in perpetuum',<sup>101</sup> "in the day in which I arose from the dead, I give you all who are in torments a day and a night of relief, forever". This statement is oblique enough to make possible two different interpretations: either a day of respite is given at any Easter or on any Sunday. Both these interpretations helped determine the 'time of the visit' of the soul to its body in the Old English tradition.<sup>102</sup> Furthermore, the abbreviated *Redactions*, some of which strongly emphasise the sections related to the vision of Hell and the respite of the Damned, also exerted a notable influence on the 'Soul and Body' theme, as I shall discuss in Chapter 1.<sup>103</sup>

#### I.7. THE WESTERN LATIN TRADITION

The influence of the *Visio Pauli* on the Macarian tale is evident in the Latin adaptations of the legend concerning the separation of the soul from the body. The chief Latin source is the text known as the *Nonantola Version*, preserved in Roma, Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Roma, MS Sess. 52 (2096), ff.

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<sup>101</sup> Silverstein and Hilhorst, p. 162, ll. 8-10.

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Willard, pp. 957-83.

<sup>103</sup> According to scholars, the *Apocalypse of Paul* also contributed to the analogous *exemplum* of the 'Three Utterances of the Soul', which concerns the exclamations of a damned and a good soul, and the replies of the angel and devil that conduct the souls to the otherworld. This *exemplum* is found in Latin, Irish, and Old English texts; notably, the Old English versions are recorded in manuscripts also preserving 'Soul and Body' material. See Rudolph Willard, ed., *Two Apocrypha in Old English Homilies*, Beiträge zur englischen Philologie, 30 (Leipzig: Bernhard Tauchnitz, 1935); Id., 'The Latin Texts of The Three Utterances of the Soul', *Speculum*, 12.2 (1937), pp. 147-66; Mary F. Wack and Charles D. Wright, 'A New Latin Source for the Old English "Three Utterances" Exemplum', *Anglo-Saxon England*, 20 (1991), 187-202; DiPaolo Healey, p. 69; Charles D. Wright, 'Three Utterances Apocryphon', in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture. The Apocrypha*, ed. by Frederick M. Briggs, Instrumenta Anglistica Mediaevalia, 1 (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), pp. 80-83.

193<sup>r</sup>-194<sup>v</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> century, and published by Batiouchkof.<sup>104</sup> Two more versions of this text are known, both preserved in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 2846, fols 135-139<sup>v</sup> and 173<sup>v</sup>-177<sup>v</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> century. According to Leclercq, who edited the MS Latin 2846 texts, these two versions can be traced back to a single lost source; furthermore, linguistic features show that the Latin tale of Macarius was already circulating between the sixth and seventh centuries.<sup>105</sup>

A key development occurs in the Latin tradition represented by the *Nonantola Version* and its variants: the soul's lament found in Alexander the Ascetic's homily was morphed into a direct accusation by the soul of the body (the 'Soul's Address to the Body'), set at the moment of death and not during the tour of the universe. In the present state of our knowledge, it is impossible to state whether the 'Soul's Address to the Body' was already found in some Mediterranean texts or whether it was an innovation by a later, Latin homilist. Dudley considers the Soul's Address to be 'an outgrowth of the Egyptian traditions',<sup>106</sup> the primitive form being a 'mere farewell which the soul speaks to its body'.<sup>107</sup> As DiPaolo Healey notes:

The address is a later development, perhaps occasioned [...] by the statement in the Long Versions [of the *Visio Pauli*] that the soul, after it comes forth from its body, should look upon and take knowledge of its body [...]. The soul's consideration of its body as a sharer in bliss or partner in torment provides the opportune moment for it to utter a speech of praise or blame.<sup>108</sup>

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<sup>104</sup> Batiouchkof, pp. 576-78.

<sup>105</sup> See Jean Leclercq, 'Deux anciennes versions de la légende de l'Abbé Macaire', *Revue Mabillon*, 36 (1946), 64-79.

<sup>106</sup> Dudley, p. 104.

<sup>107</sup> Dudley, pp. 106.

<sup>108</sup> Antonette DiPaolo Healey, ed., *The Old English Vision of St Paul*, Speculum Anniversary Monographs, 2 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1978), p. 45.

The widespread influence of the *Visio Pauli* may also help to explain how the legend could have travelled to Western Latinity. Silverstein notes that many striking features of the *Visio* ‘must [...] have reached the West by devious paths from numerous and indistinguishable sources’.<sup>109</sup> It is possible, then, that the ‘Soul and Body Legend’ was considered by some homilists to be a text related to, or associated with, the *Apocalypse of Paul*, thus accompanying the apocryphal story on its way across the Mediterranean Sea.

In the three Latin versions of the Macarian tale, set in Alexandria, Macarius has a vision of two deaths, of a rich man and a good monk,<sup>110</sup> and hears two corresponding speeches of parting souls: a damned soul and then a blessed soul, both addressing their former bodies. The structure of the two speeches is the same: it is based on a contrast between the condition of the soul and that of the body during life (the body was dressed with garments while the soul was naked; the body ate good food while the soul was starving, etc.):

Tunc (m)estuans<sup>111</sup> illa misera anima dicere cepit: “Heu me, heu me, quare unquam in corpore illud tenebrosum et pessimum ingredi merui! – Ve tibi, misera anima, quare pecunias et alienas facultates et substantias pauperum tulisti et congregasti in domo tua! Tunc bibebas vinum et nimis decorasti carnes tuas illustrissimis vestibus et pulcherrimis. Tu eras fecunda, o caro, et ego maculenta ; tu eras virens et ego pallida ; tu eras hiliaris [sic] et ego tristis; tu ridebas et ego semper plorabam. Modo eris esca vermium et putredo pulveris, et requiesces

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<sup>109</sup> Silverstein, p. 12.

<sup>110</sup> The difference in the way in which a rich and a poor man die, which conflates with the representation of the deaths of the righteous and the wicked, can be traced back to the Parable of the Dives and poor Lazarus in Luke 16: 19-31 (see Batiouchkof, pp. 53, 532-33); the double treatment of the righteous and the wicked possibly finds its roots in the representation of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25: 31-46.

<sup>111</sup> *m* in brackets in the text; read *aestuans*.

modicum tempus, et me deduxisti cum fletu ad inferos”.<sup>112</sup>

(Then the wretched soul, writhing, started to speak: “Woe is me, woe is me, why did I ever deserve to enter that dark and worst body? Alas, you, wretched soul, why did you take and gather in your home money, wealth belonging to others, and possessions of the poor! At that time, you used to drink wine and you excessively adorned your flesh with excellent and most beautiful clothes. You were plump, o corpse, and I was slim; you were flourishing, and I was pale; you were happy and I was sad; you laughed and I always wept. Now you shall be food for worms and putrefaction of dust, and you are resting for a short while, and you conducted me with tears to hell”).

At the end of the damned soul’s speech, the body starts to change complexion (turning to black, probably a sign of the ‘eternal darkness’ awaiting the damned soul) and to sweat, and a troop of devils prick the soul, before showing it the light of Heaven and dragging it to Hell. Similarly, the good soul starts to shine after its speech and is brought to Heaven by a group of angels.<sup>113</sup>

As often noted by scholars (and as I shall fully discuss in Chapter 1), the Latin tale of Macarius is closely related to two passages of two Old English homilies.<sup>114</sup> Furthermore, Dudley has discovered a fourth Latin variant of the tale (though she only knew the *Nonantola Version* at the time) in the *Sermo LXIX* of the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*.<sup>115</sup> Subsequent studies have suggested that the pseudo-Augustinian collection of *Sermones ad fratres in eremo* was compiled around the thirteenth century, was variously expanded at

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<sup>112</sup> Batiouchkof, pp. 576-77.

<sup>113</sup> See Batiouchkof, pp. 576-78.

<sup>114</sup> As stated above, Zupitza, pp. 369-404, printed a comparison of the three versions.

<sup>115</sup> Dudley, ‘An Early Homily’, pp. 225-53. Edition in Augustine (incertus), *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Garnier 1844-1864), xL, cols. 1235-1358 (cols. 1355-57).

different stages,<sup>116</sup> and probably included texts by multiple authors and written at different times.<sup>117</sup> This means that the text of *Sermo LXIX* is probably a later reception of the tradition represented by the *Nonantola Version*. Notably, *Sermo LXIX* omits the whole Blessed Soul's section (as well as Macarius' name, though retaining the Egyptian setting) and displays an ongoing emphasis on the Damned Soul's speech, which is also expanded (although the text of *Sermo LXIX* could arguably be based on a further, different version of the Macarian tale, in which the speech was longer).<sup>118</sup> The omission of the Blessed Soul section is also consistent with the contemporary vernacular developments of the 'Soul and Body' theme.

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<sup>116</sup> See Palémon Glorieux, *Pour Revaloriser Migne: Tables Rectificatives*, Cahier Supplémentaire aux Mélanges de Science Religieuse, 9 (Lille: Facultés Catholiques, 1952), p. 31; John Machielsen, ed., *Clavis Patristica Pseudepigraphorum Medii Aevi. Volumen I: Opera Homiletica* (Turnhout: Brepols, 1990), p. 242, 260; Eric L. Saak, *Creating Augustine. Interpreting Augustine and Augustinianism in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), pp. 81-138.

<sup>117</sup> See Saak, p. 86. Furthermore, *Sermo LXIX* did not belong to the original set of *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, although it is similar to them in style: see *CPPM*, I, pp. 242, 260.

<sup>118</sup> For a textual discussion on the texts, see Dudley, 'An Early Homily', pp. 225-53. I plan to offer a closer, more detailed analysis of all the different versions of the Latin tale of Macarius in a future study. For the present, I confine myself to the consideration that, from a first collation of the texts, the supposed lost source from which the two versions published by Leclercq descend can hardly be the same source as the *Sermo LXIX ad fratres in eremo* and/or the *Nonantola Version*. Thus, we have to suppose at least three lost versions: ω) the archetype; α) a copy of ω from which the two texts in MS Latin 2846 derive; β) a different copy of ω from which the *Nonantola Version* and, with significant omissions, the base text for *Sermo LXIX* derive. The scribe of the *Nonantola Version* could have cut some passages from β, while the base text for *Sermo LXIX* eliminates the whole Blessed Soul section while retaining some original, longer features of the Damned Soul's speech found in β. Nonetheless, I am aware that the textual history of the Latin tale of Macarius is probably more complex than this; for example, further intermediate versions between β and *Sermo LXIX* must probably be assumed.

Another Latin text, unrelated to the ones mentioned above, preserves sections on both the Blessed and the Damned soul, although in a different order and in a different context. This text, the pseudo-Isidorian *Sermo III*,<sup>119</sup> features a periodical visit of the soul, which seeks its body every Easter; it stands as a clear example of how the *Visio Pauli* has influenced and changed the ancient ‘Soul and Body Legend’, as will be discussed in Chapter 1.

To these above-mentioned homilies, two Latin hexameters embedded in an Early Middle English exegetical sermon, Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea*, must be added.<sup>120</sup> Whether these verses are part of a lost Latin poem or an original composition by the Trinity homilist is a vexed issue; as I shall discuss in Chapter 2.2, I am inclined to think that the two hexameters were copied from a Latin poem, thus being a fragment of a further Latin source, which preserved both the Blessed and the Damned Soul’s speeches.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> Edition in Isidore of Seville (incertus), *Sermones*, in PL, LXXXIII, cols. 1217-28 (cols. 1223-28).

<sup>120</sup> Edition in Richard Morris, ed., *Old English Homilies of the Twelfth Century. From the Unique Ms. B. 14. 52 in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge*, EETS, OS 53 (London: Trübner, 1873), pp. 172-85.

<sup>121</sup> In my opinion, another Latin example (though textually unrelated to the vernacular texts that are the object of the present study) is in the passage on the death of the bishop in the *Passio Sancti Adalberti martiris Christi*, written around the year 999; edition in Gábor Klaniczay, ed., translated and annotated by Cristian Gaspar and Marina Miladinov, with an introductory essay by Ian Wood, *Vitae sanctorum aetatis conversionis Europae Centralis (Saec. x-xi): Saints of the Christianization Age of Central Europe (Tenth-Eleventh Century)*, Central European Medieval Texts, 6 (Budapest and New York, Central European University Press, 2013), p. 108 ‘Nam in extremo anhelitu, cum tamen adhuc magna pars animę superstes foret, astantibus, quorum ille adolescens unus erat, hanc fabellam ęgra uoce retulit: “Ei mihi! Qualis eram et quantum diuersus ab illo, qualem me nunc esse uellem! Heu me miserum! Perdidi dies meos; iam penitentię fructus nusquam! Peribit nunc honor meus et inanes diuitię. O caro putribilis et esca uermium, ubi nunc gloria et pulchritudo uanitatis tue? Decepisti me, decepisti, fallax

Although the influence of these Latin texts on some Old English homiletic material is indisputable, the same cannot be said for the possible relationship between the Latin ‘Soul’s Address’ homilies and the subsequent Latin debate tradition. The studies conducted by Batiouchkof and Dudley tried to investigate a possible, continuing tradition between a text like the *Nonantola Version* and a debate poem like the *Visio Philiberti*, but such a continuity, even after the discovery of the *Royal Debate*, cannot be taken for granted. As I argue in Chapter 3, the Latin poems based on the debate between the body and the soul heavily depend on contemporary rhetorical patterns and descend from the wider genre of medieval debate poetry. Nonetheless, the presence of the image of the troops of devils in the concluding sections of the *Royal Debate* and of the *Visio Philiberti*<sup>122</sup> prevents us from ruling out the possibility of a persistence of elements of the ‘Soul and Body Legend’ in these debate texts. The established literary tradition of body and soul in which the two are presented as two opposite entities would readily have accommodated itself to the debate genre, which adopted and adapted an already existing theme along the rhetorical and dialectical features of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.

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seculum, promittens mihi annosam etatem, et ecce! insperatę mortis gladio ut male interemisti animam meam!’ , “In fact, in his last breath – when, however, the main part of his spirit was still surviving – with a troubled voice he told this tale to the people standing by, among whom there was a young man: Woe to me! How I was and how different from the one I wish I were now! Woe to me, the wretched one! I wasted my days; and yet the fruit of penance is nowhere! Now my honour and my pointless wealth will perish. O corpse, doomed to rot, and food for worms, where is now the glory and beauty of your vanity? You deceived me, deceived me, o deceitful world, promising me a long life, and behold! How badly you destroyed my life with a sword of unexpected death!’”. The passage ‘o caro putribilis et esca uermium’ seems inspired by an address of the soul to the body. Translation is my own. On the *Passio Sancti Adalberti martiris Christi*, see Klaniczay et al., pp. 77-95.

<sup>122</sup> On the devils and the *Visio Philiberti*, see Dudley, *The Egyptian Elements*, pp. 115-18, 123-25.

## CHAPTER 1. THE OLD ENGLISH TRADITION

### 1.1. FORMS AND VARIANTS OF THE OLD ENGLISH ‘SOUL’S ADDRESS TO THE BODY’

In the present chapter, I shall consider the different – and often contrasting – Old English texts that feature the literary topos of a soul that addresses its dead body with words of reproach. I shall propose a subdivision of the Old English ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ texts into three different ‘types’, each of which is characterised by the recurrence of some common motifs. This subdivision aims to achieve a clear understanding of the evolution of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme both within and beyond the Old English boundaries. My purpose is to show that, in the earliest ‘Soul and Body’ attestations, there is a basic ‘form’ that would be retained and reworked by later authors. This will become evident in the next chapter, which deals with the Early Middle English phase. My second aim is to propose a relative chronology of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme in Old English and to highlight the elements that form a continuing tradition with the texts of the Early Middle English phase.

I now introduce all the different texts belonging to the Old English phase that feature the topos of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’:

1. The *Soul and Body* poem. Preserved in Exeter, Cathedral Library, MS 3501 (*Exeter Book*), fols 98<sup>r</sup>-100<sup>r</sup>, second half of the tenth century (Ker n. 116) (*Soul and Body I*); Vercelli, Biblioteca Capitolare, MS CXVIII (*Vercelli Book*), fols 101<sup>v</sup>-103<sup>v</sup>, second half of the tenth century (Ker n. 394) (*Soul and Body II*);<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Critical edition in Douglas Moffat, ed., *The Old English Soul and Body* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1990).



2. Homily IV of the *Vercelli Book* (henceforth: *Vercelli IV*). Preserved in MS Vercelli CXVII, fols 16<sup>v</sup>-24<sup>v</sup>; Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 41, pp. 254-80, first half of the eleventh century (Ker n. 32); Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 367, part II, fol. 25, twelfth century (Ker n. 63);<sup>2</sup>
3. Homily XXII of the *Vercelli Book* (henceforth: *Vercelli XXII*). Preserved in MS Vercelli CXVII, fols 116<sup>v</sup>-120<sup>v</sup>;<sup>3</sup>
4. The so-called *Macarius Homily* preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 201, pp. 222-230, middle of the eleventh century (Ker n. 50);<sup>4</sup>
5. The twenty-ninth sermon published in Arthur Napier's collection of Wulfstan's and pseudo-Wulfstanian homilies (henceforth: *Napier XXIX*). Preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 113, fols 66-73, third quarter of the eleventh century (Ker n. 331);<sup>5</sup>
6. A homily preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 85/86, fols 2<sup>v</sup>/12<sup>r</sup>-17<sup>r</sup>, middle of the eleventh century (Ker n. 336) (henceforth: *Junius Homily*);<sup>6</sup>
7. Homily XIV of Assmann's collection (titled *Über das Jüngste Gericht*;

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<sup>2</sup> Edition in Donald G. Scragg, ed., *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, EETS, OS 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 87-104.

<sup>3</sup> Edition in Scragg, pp. 366-80.

<sup>4</sup> Edition in Hans Sauer, ed., *Theodulfi Capitula in England: Die altenglischen Übersetzungen* (München: Wilhelm Fink, 1978), pp. 411-16.

<sup>5</sup> Edition in Arthur S. Napier, ed., *Wulfstan: Sammlung der ihm zugeschriebenen Homilien nebst Untersuchungen über ihre Echtheit I, Text und Varianten* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1883), pp. 134-43.

<sup>6</sup> Editions in Rudolph Willard, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body', *PMLA*, 50.4 (1935), 957-83, at pp. 961-63; Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda, ed., *Nuove Omelie Anglosassoni della Rinascenza Benedettina* (Firenze: Le Monnier, 1977), pp. 158-73.

henceforth: *Assmann XIV*). Preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 302, pp. 73-78, eleventh-twelfth century (Ker n. 56);<sup>7</sup> London, British Library, MS Cotton Faustina A.ix, fols 23<sup>v</sup>-27<sup>v</sup>, early twelfth century (Ker n. 153);<sup>8</sup>

8. Homily XL of Cambridge, University Library, MS li.1.33, fols 207<sup>r</sup>-211<sup>r</sup>, second half of the twelfth century (Ker n. 18) (henceforth: *Augustini Sermo*).<sup>9</sup>

In a recent contribution, Samantha Zacher presents an overview of the textual relationships between these eight texts;<sup>10</sup> some of these connections will be also noted and discussed in due course. In the present study, I also adopt Zacher's denomination of the homilies.

Given the textual evidence, the known analogues, the source studies and the later development of this subgenre in England, I would argue that three different 'types' of the Old English 'Soul and Body' literature can be identified and summarised as follows:

1. In the texts of 'type 1', a damned soul departs from its body at the moment of death. The parting soul blames its body for the eternal damnation it is doomed to endure, with a distinctive antithetical

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<sup>7</sup> Dated early twelfth century by Elaine Treharne, 'Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, 302', in *The Production and Use of English Manuscripts 1060 to 1220*, ed. by Orietta Da Rold, Takako Kato, Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne (Leicester: University of Leicester 2010-2013), <[www.le.ac.uk/english/em1060to1220/mss/EM.CCCC.302.htm](http://www.le.ac.uk/english/em1060to1220/mss/EM.CCCC.302.htm)>, last accessed October 2018.

<sup>8</sup> Edition in Bruno Assmann, ed., *Angelsächsische Homilien und Heiligenleben* (Kassel: Georg H. Wigand, 1889), pp. 164-69.

<sup>9</sup> Editions in Willard, pp. 963-965; Luiselli Fadda, pp. 139-57.

<sup>10</sup> Samantha Zacher, *Preaching the Converted. The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies*, Toronto Anglo-Saxon Series, 1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), pp. 144-47.

pattern: an opposition is drawn between the actions of the body and the condition of the soul during its lifetime. At the end of the soul's speech, the body starts to change colour; a troop of devils seizes the soul and starts to pierce it. This stage is represented in Latin by the tale of Macarius (whose most prominent witness is the *Nonantola Version*)<sup>11</sup> and by the pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo LXIX ad fratres in eremo*;<sup>12</sup> in the Old English tradition, it informed the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*. The twenty-second Vercelli homily can also be regarded as belonging to this phase. In fact, as I shall argue, it may represent the earliest known stage of the 'Soul and Body' theme in Old English. In this 'type', no speeches of the Blessed Soul are preserved, although they existed in the *Nonantola Version* and its variants;

2. In the texts of 'type 2', devils are not involved and there are two different souls, a damned and a blessed one, which do not address their respective bodies at the moment of death; rather, they periodically visit the bodies at Easter (type 2a) or once a week (type 2b). According to scholars, the 'Easter' tradition was inspired by the

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<sup>11</sup> Preserved in Roma, Biblioteca nazionale centrale Vittorio Emanuele II, MS Sess. 52 (2096), ff. 193<sup>r</sup>-194<sup>v</sup>, edition in Theodor Batiouchkof, 'Le Débat de l'Ame et du Corps', *Romania*, 20 (1891), 1-55, 513-78, at pp. 576-78. As mentioned in the Introduction, I.7, other two versions are preserved in Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS Latin 2846, fols 135-139<sup>v</sup> and 173<sup>v</sup>-177<sup>v</sup> and have been published by Jean Leclercq, 'Deux anciennes versions de la légende de l'Abbé Macaire', *Revue Mabillon*, 36 (1946), 64-79. Further references to the Latin tale of Macarius will be quoted from the *Nonantola Version*, due to the importance accorded to this text by previous scholarship and due to the relative textual closeness of the three exemplars.

<sup>12</sup> Edition in Augustine (incertus), *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Latina*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 221 vols (Paris: Garnier 1844-1864), XL, cols. 1235-1358 (cols. 1355-57).

Long Latin version of the *Visio Pauli*<sup>13</sup> and is found in the Latin pseudo-Isidorian *Sermo III*,<sup>14</sup> a version of which served as a source for the Old English *Augustini Sermo*. The tradition of a weekly visit probably relies on the *Redactions* of the *Visio Pauli*.<sup>15</sup> No known Latin analogue survives for this tradition, which, on the other hand, informs the Vercelli-Exeter *Soul and Body* poem and, perhaps, the *Junius Homily*;

3. In the texts of ‘type 3’, a damned and a blessed soul perform their respective speeches at the Final Judgment. There is no known Latin source for this stage, nor must one be necessarily assumed. Possibly, this shift is an original creation by Old English homilists who placed the ‘Soul’s Address’ in what they thought could be a proper setting: in one case (that of *Assmann XIV*) with a ‘minimum of art’<sup>16</sup>, in the other case (that of *Vercelli IV*) with notable artistic achievement. *Assmann XIV* is actually related to type 2b, while *Vercelli IV* is an outgrowth of type 1, as I aim to show.

It must be pointed out that this is meant to be neither a clear-cut division nor a strict chronological one: for example, different types are preserved in the same manuscript, as in the case of the *Vercelli Book*, which preserves texts of all three ‘types’.<sup>17</sup> The adaptability of the topos allowed the homilist to

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<sup>13</sup> See Willard, pp. 957-83; Antonette DiPaolo Healey, ed., *The Old English Vision of St Paul*, Speculum Anniversary Monographs, 2 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1978), pp. 48-49.

<sup>14</sup> Edition in Isidore of Seville (incertus), *Sermones*, PL, LXXXIII, cols. 1217-28 (cols. 1223-28). I shall discuss this text and its manuscript history below, 1.3.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Willard, pp. 957-83; DiPaolo Healey, p. 49.

<sup>16</sup> Willard, p. 979.

<sup>17</sup> For a study on the manuscripts containing Old English ‘Soul and Body’ material, see Dorothy Ina Haines, ‘Rhetorical Strategies in Old English Prose: A Study of Three Dramatic

reshape, include or exclude some features depending on the purpose of the sermon. This is particularly evident in the 'Soul's Addresses' of 'type 2', which differ from each other in many aspects. The 'Soul's Address to the Body' became a more structured and organised literary device only in the Early Middle English phase, as will be shown in Chapter 2.

The main problem for a discussion on the Old English 'Soul and Body' literature is, in fact, the lack of homogeneity in the literature of this phase. All the Old English treatments significantly differ from each other. This problem probably derives from the gap of several centuries between the so-called 'Soul and Body legend', rooted in the Mediterranean area in the early centuries of Christianity, and the topos of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' developed in tenth-century England. In her discussion of the Egyptian origins of the 'legend', Dudley did not include the Old and Middle English poetical works because 'they do not belong to the direct line of development of the legend, and also because they show no marked Egyptian influence'.<sup>18</sup> As mentioned in the Introduction, the 'legend' is, in fact, a constellation of tales about the way in which blessed and damned souls are removed from their bodies at the hour of death, the presence and actions of angels and devils, the path of the soul to heaven and the many perils it has to face during its journey. All these elements are scarcely represented in the Old English texts; the few exceptions

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Monologues' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 1998), pp. 52-61. For a different classification, which groups the Old English and the Latin homilies together, see Gail D.D. Ricciardi, 'The Grave-Bound Body and Soul: A Collective Edition of Four Related Poems from the Vercelli and Exeter Books, Bodley and Worcester Manuscripts' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), pp. 92-129.

<sup>18</sup> Louise Dudley, *The Egyptian Elements in the Legend of the Body and Soul*, Bryn Mawr Monographs, 8 (Baltimore, MD: J.H. Furst, 1911), p. 15.

will be discussed at a later stage.<sup>19</sup>

The Old English 'Soul and Body' works can be approached in three different ways:

1. Chronologically (by manuscript date);
2. Thematically, which means grouping the texts on the basis of shared motifs;
3. By temporal setting, which means grouping the texts on the basis of the different times at which the soul comes to visit its body to reproach it (henceforth: the 'time of the visit').

This last subdivision, which provides an important background to the present study, is based on Willard's pivotal treatment of the theme and, more recently, has been proposed in a dissertation by Brent.<sup>20</sup> Nonetheless, this approach seems too limited to a single aspect (that of the 'time of the visit') and does not offer an adequate account of the elements of continuity with the Early Middle English phase. As for the second, a strict chronological division based on the manuscript history does not provide any satisfactory explanation of the many differences among the texts, for the obvious reason that manuscripts may be copied much later than the date of composition of the works they preserve.

The methodology I adopt is, then, a study of the Old English works on the basis of shared motifs. The topic of the different settings that frame the visit of the soul to the body, discussed by Willard and Brent, will be considered as a 'motif' in its own right. Furthermore, a division based on the different

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<sup>19</sup> Terminologically, I refer to the 'Soul and Body Legend' for the Mediterranean tale, whereas I use 'Soul's Address to the Body' to define the Old and Early Middle English topos and 'Soul and Body' for the entire theme.

<sup>20</sup> See Willard, 957-83; Justin J. Brent, 'The Legend of Soul and Body in Medieval England' (unpublished doctoral thesis, State University of New York, 2000), pp. 74-132.

settings and one based on common motifs tend to overlap, as we shall see: texts framed by a similar ‘time of the visit’ usually share other recurring features, such as the presence or omission of an address by a Blessed Soul to its body.

In her study of the English religious lyrics, Woolf considers the Old English ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ to be an ‘isolated anecdote’;<sup>21</sup> Moffat has since emphasised its ‘versatility’, calling it an *exemplum*.<sup>22</sup> Rather than an anecdote or an *exemplum*, the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ can be better described as a complex topos, which can itself be broken into smaller units (*motifs*), and it is set in different contexts. This topos usually constitutes the *climax* of the sermons in which it is featured, when not the main bulk of the text, which is brought to a close after the end of the ‘Soul’s Address’. In its basic form, the topos is based on a lament made by a Soul doomed to eternal damnation. This lament usually turns into an accusation towards the body that hosted the soul in lifetime. The emphasis on the speech, the focus on the culpability of the body and the contrastive structure in which the soul’s address is developed are all specific features of the Old English tradition, not found in the Mediterranean legend.

Furthermore, the Old English topos is framed by three different temporal settings, or ‘time of the visit’:

1. The moment of death;
2. A periodical visit of the soul in an intermediate time between death

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<sup>21</sup> Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 93.

<sup>22</sup> Moffat, p. 34. See also Brent, p. 81: ‘the soul’s address to its body was only one of several motifs that the homilist could invoke in penitential contexts. All of them take place between death and Final Judgment, and all serve the purpose of discouraging the congregation from sinful behavior’.

and the Last Judgment;

### 3. The Last Judgment.

A puzzling aspect is the presence, in some Old English works, of both a damned and a blessed soul, each addressing its own body. According to Dudley, the blessed soul is an early feature, belonging to the original ‘Soul and Body legend’, which tended to disappear in the West<sup>23</sup> because of the emphasis put on punishments and on ‘the more lurid elements’.<sup>24</sup> This hypothesis seems to be confirmed by developments in the Latin tradition: the pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo LXIX ad fratres in eremo*, which is presumably later than the *Nonantola Version*,<sup>25</sup> omits the Blessed Soul section. Nonetheless, blessed souls appear also in later vernacular texts. Willard has proposed an explanation based on a possible relationship between the order of the two addresses and the different settings:

There is a difference in the Old English texts between the first tradition of the address, that of the separation of the soul from the body, and the second, of the periodic return of the soul to the body, in this respect: in the first, only the sinful soul is described as making an address, in the second both souls speak.<sup>26</sup>

Willard’s study shows that both the motif of a periodical visit of the soul to its body and the presence and order of two distinct speeches (by the righteous and the damned soul) depend on different versions of the same source: the *Visio Pauli*. In particular, different features of the tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ in Anglo-Saxon England have been influenced by the Long Latin Version and the later, shortened Latin *Redactions* of the

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<sup>23</sup> Dudley, p. 110.

<sup>24</sup> Willard, p. 975.

<sup>25</sup> See Introduction, I.7.

<sup>26</sup> Willard, p. 976.



*Apocalypse of Paul*, respectively. To correctly understand the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ tradition, some further consideration on the *Visio Pauli* and its reception in England is required.

As stated in the Introduction, I.6, it is generally recognised that the *Visio Pauli* played a major role in the elaboration of the ‘Soul and Body legend’, especially in features such as the Sabbath-day respite of the damned and in the vision of two death scenes, of a righteous and of a wicked men.<sup>27</sup> We are sure that the Long Latin version of this apocryphal vision was current in England because of mentions of it by Aldhelm and Ælfric, and especially because the only vernacular translation of the Long Latin is preserved in Old English.<sup>28</sup> From the tenth century, shortened Latin versions of the *Visio* began to circulate. These versions, known as *Redactions*, have been adapted, both in prose and verse, from the twelfth century, but they were also known in the Old English period.<sup>29</sup>

Willard argues that ‘in all probability the Old English legend of the body and soul had already formed and crystallized before the formation of our abbreviate redactions of the *Apocalypse of Paul*’, and that ‘it is the long rather

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<sup>27</sup> Theodore Silverstein, ed., *Visio Sancti Pauli: The History of the Apocalypse in Latin together with Nine Texts* (London: Christophers, 1935), p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> On the Old English tradition of the *Visio Pauli*, see DiPaolo Healey, pp. 41-57; Ead., ‘Apocalypse of Paul’, in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture. The Apocrypha*, ed. by Frederick M. Briggs, *Instrumenta Anglistica Mediaevalia*, 1 (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), pp. 67-70; Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda, ‘Una inedita traduzione anglosassone della *Visio Pauli*’, *Studi Medievali*, 3.15 (1974), 482-95. The Old English version corresponds to paragraphs 4-17 of the Latin *Visio*; see Luiselli Fadda, p. 483.

<sup>29</sup> See Silverstein, pp. 10-12, who notes references to the *Redactions* in the Blickling Homily XVI *To Sancte Michaeles Mæssan* and in Homily XLIII of Napier’s collection of Wulfstanian and pseudo-Wulfstanian sermons. On the Early Middle English texts of the *Visio Pauli*, see Chapter 3.5.

than the short redaction [...] that was influential in this process'.<sup>30</sup> The Long Latin version, then, contributed to shape the episode of the separation of the soul from the body and the topos of the 'Soul's Address to the Body', which is 'a natural development of the two death scenes recorded in the *Vision*'.<sup>31</sup> When the *Redactions* became available in England, they probably influenced the already existing 'Soul and Body' tradition in two key aspects: the presence of two speeches, of a blessed and a damned soul, and the motif of a periodical visit of the soul to the body.<sup>32</sup>

The Long Latin version of the *Visio Pauli* preserves a definite order of the two death scenes: the righteous man dies first and the wicked one after. This order was possibly influenced, in turn, by the order of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25.31-46. The episode of the suspension of torment for the damned souls is less clear: 'there is some disagreement among scholars whether this respite in the Long Versions of the *Vision* was originally annual or weekly'.<sup>33</sup> In the later *Redactions*, the respite is unequivocally set on Sunday and the order of the death scenes is reversed, with the death of the wicked man preceding that of the righteous man – or with the episode of the righteous man

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<sup>30</sup> Willard, p. 976.

<sup>31</sup> DiPaolo Healey, 'The Old English Vision of St Paul', p. 42.

<sup>32</sup> Willard, pp. 972-73: 'this legend of the Respite united with two others: one, that the soul tarried after death for some time, partly immediately by the body, partly wandering about visiting the scenes of its past life, before it left for the Other-World, and the other, that at the hour of death the soul addressed its body. It is the interaction of these three upon each other that engendered our legend of the return of the soul to its body, at stated intervals, for a period of communion with the body, wherein the wicked soul cursed, and the righteous soul blessed, the body in which it had lived, and which, though now in decay, is awaiting the resurrection, when the two shall be united and undergo final judgement together on the Last Day'. See also DiPaolo Healey, p. 46.

<sup>33</sup> DiPaolo Healey, p. 48.

dropped altogether.<sup>34</sup>

In the 'Soul and Body' tradition, the increasing tendency to draw the reader's attention to the 'the more lurid elements'<sup>35</sup> caused the episode of the Blessed Soul to be abandoned;<sup>36</sup> the earliest stage of the Old English tradition does not feature this episode. Nonetheless, some authors felt that the positive counterpart represented by a Blessed Soul could still be didactically useful. The renewal of the episode of the Blessed Soul in the Old English tradition can be ascribed, I think, to a second layer of influence of the *Visio Pauli*. It is arguable that the *Visio Pauli* not only contributed to the formation of the topos set at the moment of death, but has also 'revived' and modified the Old English 'Soul and Body' tradition, possibly because of a renewed interest in the *Visio Pauli* after the circulation of the *Redactions*. The fact that, in the Early Middle English phase, both the motif of the periodical return of the soul and the two different addresses will disappear confirms, to some extent, that these elements were later, 'weaker' innovations of the earlier and more established tradition of the single address of the Damned Soul in a deathbed setting. In other words, the topos of 'Soul's Address to the Body' in Old English was first established as a deathbed scene in which only a sinful soul speaks. This tradition was subsequently modified by the development of the *Redactions* of the *Visio Pauli*, which re-introduced the episode of the address of a Blessed Soul. This episode was found in the earlier stages of the 'Soul

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<sup>34</sup> See Willard, p. 976: 'because of the development and wide spread of the abbreviated redactions of the Apocalypse of Paul, wherein this order is reversed and the Respite became dominical and sharply defined [...], it is quite probable that, in our legend, too, the periodic returns of the souls to their bodies became more frequent, and weekly instead of annual, and that the order of the addresses changed, with the greater emphasis falling on the sinful soul'.

<sup>35</sup> Willard, p. 975.

<sup>36</sup> Dudley, p. 110.

and Body' legend, but was soon abandoned in the West; it was 'revived' because the popularity of the *Redactions* inspired some authors to add a counterbalance to the portrait of the Damned Soul. This hypothesis is supported by the development of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' in Old English literature, as discussed in this Chapter 1.3.

I shall now approach the different Old English 'Soul and Body' texts in detail. In the following discussion, I shall refer to some distinctive motifs of 'type 1' (like the presence of devils, the deathbed setting, and the changing of colour) as 'early' features, which must be understood as recurring motifs, probably descending from the legend traced by Dudley and Batiouchkof, which influenced the basic structure of the Old English 'Soul's Address to the Body'. I shall begin by discussing the texts of 'type 1'.

## 1.2. THE MACARIUS HOMILY, *NAPIER XXIX*, AND THE CASE OF *VERCELLI XXII*

Any study of the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX* cannot escape some consideration of the textual relationships amongst these two Old English homilies, their Latin analogues (the Latin tale of Macarius, e.g. the *Nonantola Version*, and the pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo LXIX ad fratres in eremo*) and other Old English 'Soul and Body' works. Dudley considers the *Macarius Homily*, *Napier XXIX* and the Latin analogues to be closely related.<sup>37</sup> The relationship between the texts is in fact complex: the vision in *Napier XXIX* depends on a lost version of the *Macarius Homily*, which, in turn, supposedly relies on a different variant of the *Nonantola Version*.<sup>38</sup> According to Wright,

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<sup>37</sup> Louise Dudley, 'An Early Homily on the Body and Soul Theme', *JEGP*, 8 (1909), 225-53. It is worth noting that Dudley knew only a single version of the Latin tale of Macarius, the *Nonantola Version*.

<sup>38</sup> Charles D. Wright, 'The Old English Macarius Homily, Vercelli Homily iv, and Ephrem Latinus, *De Pœnitentia*', in *Via Crucis: Essays on Early Medieval Sources and Ideas in Memory*

approximately the first eighty lines of *Vercelli IV* are also an expansion of the opening section of the *Macarius Homily*, whose original source is Ephrem Latinus' *De Paenitentia*.<sup>39</sup> Furthermore, part of *The Judgment Day II* poem was adapted into the second part of *Napier XXIX*; both the poem and the section of the homily are thought to depend on the Latin poem *De die iudicii*.<sup>40</sup>

This last textual connection leads us to an important consideration. No matter what the setting, the Doomsday theme is a constant feature in the homiletical content of the Old English 'Soul and Body' works. The homilist usually exhorts his audience to avoid a late repentance, because God forgives the sinners in this world, but not at the Final Judgment: 'her is his mildheortnes ofer us; ac þer is se eca dom', "here His mercy is over us; but there is the eternal doom".<sup>41</sup> As Willard points out, Doomsday is a *locus communis* of the whole of Christianity, 'the background against which all Christian thought is to be projected'.<sup>42</sup> For this reason, the homilist usually recalls that day during his sermon: it is the key moment that inscribes all the deeds of a lifetime into a broader framework.<sup>43</sup> For example, the Doomsday theme is developed in the

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of J.E. Cross, ed. by Thomas N. Hall, Thomas D. Hill, and Charles D. Wright (Morgantown: West Virginia University Press, 2002), pp. 210-34, at p. 213. See also Claudia Di Sciacca, 'The *Ubi Sunt* Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies: Sources and Relationships', *JEGP*, 105.3 (2006), 365-87, at p. 370; Haines, pp. 109-12.

<sup>39</sup> See Wright, 210-34.

<sup>40</sup> See Leslie Whitbread, "'Wulfstan" Homilies XXIX, XXX, and Some Related Texts', *Anglia*, 81 (1963), 347-64, at p. 347; Di Sciacca, p. 370.

<sup>41</sup> Sauer, p. 411, ll. 7-8. Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>42</sup> Willard, p 979.

<sup>43</sup> This is not the place for a full analysis of the Judgment Day theme, which has been immensely popular throughout both Old and Middle English literature. For an overview, see Penn Szittya, 'Domesday Bokes: The Apocalypse in Medieval English Literary Culture', in *The Apocalypse in the Middle Ages*, ed. by Richard K. Emmerson and Bernard McGinn (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 374-97. See also Milton McC. Gatch, 'Eschatology in the

first section of the *Macarius Homily*, where Christ summons the righteous and the wicked (ll. 37-54).<sup>44</sup> The vision of the Last Judgment is followed by a short *ubi sunt* passage (ll. 61-63), which is expanded by means of a reflection on the transiency of earthly things. Notably, the ‘wretched who despise God’s command’ will have no rest from their torments, except for the day when ‘Christ Saviour arose from death’<sup>45</sup>: according to DiPaolo Healey, this is a reference to the Easter respite of the Long Latin version of the *Visio Pauli*.<sup>46</sup>

The homilist then introduces a “certain holy man” (‘suman halgan men’, l. 78) who has a vision of a departing soul afraid to go out from its body (‘seo earme sawl ne dorste utgan’, l. 79) because of the demons that are waiting to seize it. The ‘holy man’ is presumably St Macarius of Alexandria, the main character of the vision, whose name has been omitted in the Old English adaptations of the tale, along with the Egyptian setting. I now quote the speech

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Anonymous Old English Homilies’, *Traditio*, 21 (1965), 117-65; Leslie Whitbread, ‘The Doomsday Theme in Old English Poetry’, *Beiträge zur Geschichte der deutschen Sprache und Literatur*, 89 (1967), 452-81; Graham D. Caie, *The Judgment Day Theme in Old English Poetry*, Publications of the Department of English, University of Copenhagen, 2 (Copenhagen: Nova, 1976). It is also worth noting that in the tenth Blickling homily, a sermon of eschatological content, a dead body speaks with a friend who goes visiting it: perhaps the first ‘body’s speech’, even if not addressed to a soul. Edition in Richard Morris, ed., *The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century, with a Translation and Index of Words, together with The Blickling Glosses*, 3 vols, EETS, OS 58, 63, and 73 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1874-1880; repr. as 1 vol., 1967), pp. 106-15; the exemplum of the dead body is at p. 113, ll. 4-33, and it is preceded by a *ubi sunt* passage, pp. 111, ll. 30-36, and 113, ll. 1-4, where the soulless body is called ‘wyrma mete’, “food for worms”. See James E. Cross, ““The Dry Bones Speak”: A Theme in Some Old English Homilies’, *JEGP*, 56.3 (1957), 434-39.

<sup>44</sup> Line-references are to Sauer’s edition.

<sup>45</sup> Sauer, p. 413, ll. 72-75: ‘ða earman þe nu Godes bebodu hyrwiað, þa beoð cwylmede, and him ne bið næfre nan rest seald, buton emne þy dæge þe Drihten Hælend Crist of deaðe aras’.

<sup>46</sup> DiPaolo Healey, p. 49.

of the Damned Soul (ll. 88-96):

Wa me earmre! To hwon sceolde ic æfre gesceapen beon, oððe for  
hwon sceolde ic æfre ingangan on þisne fulestan and wyrrestan  
lichoman? Heo þa locade to hyre lichoman and cwæð: Wa þe, þu earma  
lichoma! Þu þe wære nimende fremdra manna spedra, and þu þe æfre  
wære ofer eorðan welena strynende, and þu þe gefrætwoðest þe mid  
deorwurðe hrægle; and þu þe wære reod, and ic me wæs blac; þu wære  
glæd, and ic me wæs unrot; þu hloge, and ic weop.<sup>47</sup>

(Woe is me, wretched! Why had I ever to be created, and why had I  
ever entered this foulest and worst body? Then it looked on its body and  
said: Woe is you, you wretched body! You that were taking other  
people's property and you that were always laying up treasures on earth,  
and you that adorned yourself with precious clothes; and you were  
ruddy, and I was pale; you were glad, and I was sad; you laughed, and  
I wept).

In this context, the topos represents the *climax* of the sermon (the audience is  
invited to set the 'vision of the holy man' as an example, 'on bysne asettan',  
l. 127), after which the homilist performs a final exhortation and brings the  
homily to a close.

The 'Soul and Body' passage of *Napier XXIX* is similarly inserted for the  
same homiletic purpose (a call to repentance before Doomsday),<sup>48</sup> although

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<sup>47</sup> Sauer, p. 414.

<sup>48</sup> See Haines, pp. 50-51: 'in the two related homilies *Ad fratres LXIX* and Batiouchkof's *Nonantola Version*, the treatment of the Macarius legend takes up almost the entire homily, with very little prefatory and concluding matter added. In the OE adaptations [...] the vision has become more of what one might call an exemplum: it has been greatly shortened and supplemented with extensive admonitory passages drawn from other sources, both Latin and vernacular, or possibly original'.

the *ubi sunt* motif is not featured<sup>49</sup> and there is no mention of a respite for the damned. It is also evident that the passage in *Napier XXIX* is a close variant of the one in the *Macarius Homily*:

Wa me earmre, þæt ic æfre geboren sceolde wurðan, oððe þæt ic æfre sceolde niman eardungstowe on þis fulestan and on þis wyrstan lichaman, þe wæs a nymende earmra manna æhta on unriht. eala ðu earma lichama and wurma mete, a þu wunne æfter eorðlicum welum, and a ðu geglengdest þe mid eorðlicum hræglum and forgeate me. þonne ðu wære glæd and reod and godes hiwes, þonne wæs ic blac and swyðe unrot; þonne þu smercodeð and hloge, þonne weop ic bitterlice.<sup>50</sup> (Woe is me, wretched as I am, that I ever had to get born and that I had to take a dwelling-place in this foulest and worst body, which was an unjust taker of wretched men's property. Woe is you, wretched body and food for worms; that you always worked for earthly treasures, adorned yourself with earthly clothes, and forgot me. You were glad and ruddy and healthy, when I was pale and very sad; when you smiled and laughed, I wept bitterly).

A key feature of the Damned Soul's address to the Body in these homilies is the antithetical structure of the speech. This pattern is well represented in the Latin analogues; for example, in the *Nonantola Version*:

Tunc bibebas vinum et nimis decorasti carnes tuas illustrissimis vestibus et pulcherrimis. Tu eras fecunda, o caro, et ego maculenta ; tu eras virens et ego pallida ; tu eras hillaris [sic] et ego tristis; tu ridebas et ego semper plorabam.<sup>51</sup>

(At that time, you used to drink wine and you excessively adorned your flesh with excellent and most beautiful clothes. You were plump, o

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<sup>49</sup> For a study on the *ubi sunt* passages of the 'Soul and Body' homilies, see the above-mentioned contribution by Di Sciacca, 365-87.

<sup>50</sup> Napier, p. 140, ll. 20-29.

<sup>51</sup> Batiouchkof, p. 577.



corpse, and I was slim; you were flourishing, and I was pale; you were happy and I was sad; you laughed and I always wept).

The two Old English passages are very close to the *Nonantola*, only lacking any reference to wine. The later version found in the Latin *Sermo LXIX* transmits a more developed speech that, unlike the *Nonantola Version*, refers to drinking and dressing in the same antithetical style:

Tu cibariis delicatis te nutriebas, et ego salutem nostram esuriebam. Tu vinum bibebas saporosum, et ego fontem vitæ sitiebam. Tu te pretiosis decorasti vestibus, me nuda existente virtutibus. Tu quidem fecundum eras, et ego macra; tu rubicundum, et ego pallida; tu hilare, et ego mœsta. Tu ridebas, et ego flebam; tu gaudebas, et ego dolebam. Tu semper mihi contraria egisti.<sup>52</sup>

(You were eating delicious food, and I was hungry for our salvation. You were drinking delicious wine, and I was thirsty for the well of life. You adorned yourself with precious clothes; I remained naked of virtues. You were plump, and I was slim; you ruddy, and me pale; you glad, and me sad. You were laughing, and I was crying; you rejoiced, and I was sorry. You always did the opposite to me).

The antithetical pattern can be considered an innovative<sup>53</sup> feature of the ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition, which came to be a distinctive element of ‘type 1’ of the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ works, also influencing some later texts.<sup>54</sup> Finding its likely origin in the Pauline concept of flesh lusting against the spirit and spirit against the flesh (Galatians 5:17),<sup>55</sup> it serves the pastoral purpose of

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<sup>52</sup> PL, XL, col. 1356.

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Brent, p. 74.

<sup>54</sup> See the section on Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea* in Chapter 2.2.

<sup>55</sup> ‘Caro enim concupiscit adversus spiritum spiritus autem adversus carnem haec enim invicem adversantur ut non quaecumque vultis illa faciatis’ (all quotations from the Vulgate Bible are from the Stuttgart version). See Benjamin P. Kurz, ‘Gifer the Worm: an Essay toward the

the ‘Soul’s Address’ topos and increases its effectiveness: soul and body are ultimately two opposed and irreducible entities, forced to be joined both during lifetime and after the Last Judgment. Through the rhetorical pattern, the audience is invited to choose either earthly pleasures and eternal damnation or a life of repentance and everlasting bliss: *tertium non datur*. As Haines notes:

The way the antithetical statements are set up encourages the audience to make its own informed decision about the most worthwhile way to live one’s life. Soul and body are not meant to be read as the literal two parts of the human being, but as two choices, two points of view, two ways of living open to the individual. [...] Perhaps it was this fact that resulted in the tendency to drop the blessed soul’s speech entirely. The damned soul alone could present the desired contrast, and the comparison of the good and wicked soul became redundant.<sup>56</sup>

Of the Old English texts featuring the antithetical pattern, the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX* do not include a speech of the Blessed Soul; only the Vercelli version of the poem *Soul and Body* preserves the Blessed Soul’s section, which is also believed to be a later addition<sup>57</sup> (as will be discussed in 1.3), while, in *Vercelli IV*, the speech of the Damned Soul is almost twice as long as that of the Blessed Soul.<sup>58</sup>

In three respects, the Old English homilies of ‘type 1’ seem to retain the

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History of an Idea’, *University of California Publications in English*, 2.2 (1929), 235-61, at pp. 243-44.

<sup>56</sup> Haines, p. 96; see also Raffaele Cioffi, Roberto Rosselli Del Turco, “‘Oh polvere macchiata di sangue, perché mi hai tormentato?’: Parole di biasimo (e di conforto) di un’anima alle proprie spoglie mortali’, in *Memento mori. Il genere macabro in Europa dal Medioevo a oggi*, ed. by Mauro Piccat and Laura Ramello (Torino: Edizioni Dell’Orso, 2014), pp. 171-87, at p. 173.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Moffat, pp. 41-44.

<sup>58</sup> Haines, p. 96.

original form of the Mediterranean legend: the deathbed setting, the presence of the devils, and the ‘changing of colour’. In the *Macarius Homily*, after the damned soul has concluded its speech, it is said that ‘se lichom[a o]ngan þa swiðe swætan and mislic hiw bredan’, “the body started to sweat exceedingly and turn into different colours”.<sup>59</sup> Dudley notes that the ‘changing of colour’ seems to go back to a hypothetical lost, common source for all the different versions of the tale of Macarius.<sup>60</sup> The role of devils is, on the other hand, somewhat different from the legend: ‘the pricking of the soul [...] appears only as punishment, not as a manner of separating soul from body’.<sup>61</sup> For example in *Napier XXIX*, ll. 4-11:

Se deofol hludre stefne clypode and cwæð: “stingað stranglic sar on his eagan, forðam, swa hwæt swa unrihtes geseah, þæt wæs eall sylfwilles. stingað hine scearplice on þone muð, forði, swa hwæt swa hine lyste etan oððe drincan oððe on unnyt spreca, eall he hit aræfnode. stingað hine mid sohrlicum sare on his heortan, forðam þe on hyre ne wunode arfæstnys ne mildheortnys ne godes lufu”.<sup>62</sup>

(The devil spoke with a loud voice and said: pierce its eyes with an intense pain, because whatever sinful it saw, it did it voluntarily Pierce it sharply on the mouth, because whatever it desired to eat, drink, or

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<sup>59</sup> Sauer, p. 414, ll. 99-100. The corresponding passage in *Napier XXIX* omits ‘swipe’: Napier, p. 141, l. 3. I quote the related passages of the Latin homilies. *Nonantola Version*, in Batiouchkof, pp. 577-578: ‘tunc cepit corpus mutari et facies sudare’, “then the body started changing and its face started sweating”; ‘tunc cepit mutare colorem: antea habebat colorem cinerum, tunc cepit rubere, erat enim vultus illius hilaris’, “then it started changing colour: before it had the colour of ash, then it started flushing, his face was glad indeed”. In the *Sermo LXIX*, the body “sweats” but it does not change colour: ‘corpus sudare cœpit ac spiritum reddere’, “the body started to sweat and give up the ghost”, in PL, XL, col. 1356.

<sup>60</sup> Dudley, p. 113.

<sup>61</sup> Dudley, p. 112.

<sup>62</sup> Napier, p. 141.

vainly speak, it enjoyed. Pierce it with sorrowful pain in its heart,  
because there never dwelt in it any pity, or mercy, or love of God).

The connection between anatomical description and specific sins does not disappear but becomes less explicit in the other Old English material (for example in the Vercelli-Exeter poem); it is further developed in a later text where devils play again a prominent role, the Middle English debate *Als I Lay in a Winteris Nyte*.<sup>63</sup>

There is another Old English text that shares several features with ‘type 1’. Zacher and Di Sciacca have recently proposed that *Vercelli XXII* should be included among the ‘Soul and Body’ material. This homily is based on a selection of passages of Isidore’s *Synonyma de lamentatione animae peccatricis*,<sup>64</sup> often translating the source very closely, sometimes adapting it. For example, ‘the homilist reformulates Man’s appeal to Death in the *Synonyma*, so that [...] the same lament is spoken by the wicked soul’.<sup>65</sup> I quote the soul’s lament (ll. 47-52):

Eawla, cwæð se halga Ysidorus, þonne gyt geomrað seo sawl þe hire  
lyf ær on receleaste lifde, 7 cwið: ‘Wa la þæt ic æfre swa ungesæligo  
geboren sceolde weorðan, 7 þæt ic swa earm middangeardes leoht  
geseon sceolde! Wa la þæt ic swa lange on minum lichaman eardigan  
sceolde, þa he me reste geearnigan ne wolde! Unlust me wæs to  
lifianne, 7 walic to sweltanne.’<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>63</sup> See Chapter 3.5.

<sup>64</sup> It is worth noting that, according to studies by Cross and Di Sciacca, Isidore’s *Synonyma* is also the key source for many *ubi sunt* passages of the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ homilies: see James E. Cross, ‘*Ubi sunt* Passages in Old English: Sources and Relationships’, *Vetenskaps-Societeten i Lund Årsbok* (1956), 23-44; Di Sciacca, pp. 365-87.

<sup>65</sup> Zacher, p. 150.

<sup>66</sup> Scragg, p. 370, who also quotes the relevant lines from Isidore’s *Synonyma* I.19: ‘Cur infelix natus sum? (cur in hanc miseram uitam proiectus sum?) ut quid miser hanc lucem uidit? ut quid misero huius uitae ortus occurrit? Utinam uelocius egrederer a saeculo quam sum ingressus,

(Alas, said the holy Isidore, then the soul laments to you its life lived on negligence and says: Woe that I ever had to be born so miserably, and that I, so wretched, had to see the light of this world! Woe that I had to dwell for so long in my body, which never wanted to earn rest for me! Living was disgust to me, and dying was woeful).

A key feature of this passage is that the soul's complaint about its life is not directed at the body. Still, some of the above-mentioned motifs are briefly sketched. There is a deathbed setting (l. 37: 'sio sawl [hiofeð þonne] hio of ðam lichoman anumen bið') and the body, considered by the soul to be a forced prison, is accused of not having 'earned rest' for the soul (thus being culpable for the soul's sorrow). The soul's desire for rest, and body's refusal to earn it for the soul, create a contrast that, in embryonic form, parallels the antithetical pattern that is more fully developed in the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*. The theme of the futility of the world's pleasures is evident in the lines immediately preceding the soul's lament (ll. 45-46): 'se lichoma on eorðan fulnessum tofloweð þe we ær mid wistum feddon', "the body that we used to feed with feasts decomposes in foulness on earth";<sup>67</sup> the soul is also tortured and wounded with "a thousand-fold torments" ('þusendfealdum witum', l. 45).

Both Di Sciacca's and Zacher's studies have identified some textual connections between *Vercelli XXII*, the *Macarius Homily*, and *Napier XXIX*.<sup>68</sup> Interestingly enough, the verbal parallels they identify occur when the

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quacunq̃ue iam ratione recederem? sed heu! miseris exspectata mors tarde uenit. (Cupienti mori iam liceam occumbere). Uiuendi enim mihi taedium est, moriendi uotum, sola mihi mors placet'.

<sup>67</sup> Scragg, p. 370. This passage has no parallel in Isidore.

<sup>68</sup> See Di Sciacca, 376-378.

homilist departs from the Latin source.<sup>69</sup> A striking correspondence is the reference to the ‘middangeardes leoht’, which closely echoes *Napier XXIX* and the *Macarius Homily*, rather than Isidore’s text.<sup>70</sup> It is worth quoting Zacher’s explanation of the likely process of reworking of the Isidorian source by means of the inclusion of ‘Soul and Body’ material:

The homilist of Vercelli XXII was in all likelihood drawing those very portions of text containing soul-and-body themes (especially where they are added to the *Synonyma* account) from other traditional soul-and-body sources [...]. One can perhaps easily imagine a scenario in which the homilist of Vercelli XXII gradually inserted soul-and-body themes to the portions of the *Synonyma* he was translating and as he noted opportune moments for including this material.<sup>71</sup>

In my opinion, the Soul’s lament in *Vercelli XXII* could represent a very early stage (in fact, the earliest in the Old English *corpus*) of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme, where the soul laments its life without accusing the body. Among the extant texts, this stage is recorded only in Alexander the Ascetic’s *Toῦ Ἀγίου Μακαρίου τοῦ Ἀλεξανδρέως λόγος περὶ ἐξόδου ψυχῆς δικαίων καὶ ἀμαρτωλῶν* (‘Macarius’ sermon on the exit of the souls of the righteous and the wicked’).<sup>72</sup> Obviously, I do not mean that Alexander the Ascetic’s homily could have in

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<sup>69</sup> See Zacher, p. 167: ‘It seems hardly accidental that the correspondences between Vercelli XXII and the two homilies [...] occur at just as those moments where XXII breaks away from the *Synonyma* text’.

<sup>70</sup> Zacher, pp. 163-167. Isidore’s corresponding passage in *Synonyma* I.19 is ‘ut quid miser hanc lucem uidi?’, quoted in Scragg, p. 370. See the passage in Napier, p. 141, ll. 21-23: ‘wa me earmre, þæt ic æfre middaneardes leoht geseon sceolde, and þæt ic swa mycele beorhtnesse forlætan sceolde’.

<sup>71</sup> Zacher, p. 168.

<sup>72</sup> Macarius of Alexandria (incertus), *De exitu animarum iustorum et peccatorum*, in *Patrologiae Cursus Completus: Series Graeca*, ed. by Jacques-Paul Migne, 161 vols (Paris: Garnier, 1857-1866), xxxiv, cols. 385-95. On this text, see Introduction, I.5.

any way served as a direct source for *Vercelli XXII*. Even if we suppose the existence of a close Latin translation, the textual resemblances between the two texts are more than tenuous; nonetheless, some intermediate Latin texts informed by the Greek sermon could have influenced the soul's lament found in the Old English homily.

The main feature of the soul's lament in Alexander's *Macarius Sermon* is the regret for a life spent chasing ephemeral pleasures: 'οἱ μοι, πῶς ἐματαιώθην ἐν τῷ κόσμῳ ἐκείνῳ, ἐν ταῖς ἐπιθυμίαις τοῦ βίου ἀσχοληθεῖσα', "woe to me, how foolishly I acted in that world, having been occupied by the desires of life".<sup>73</sup> The parting soul is that of a rich man who worked all his life to acquire "vineyards" (ἀμπελῶνες) and "olive groves" (ἐλαιῶνες). The invocation to Death in *Vercelli XXII* treats a similar theme: death is seen as 'bitter' for those who prosper in this life:

Eawla, deað, swete eart ðu þam earmum 7 þam wædliendum, 7 wunsum eart ðu þam unrotum 7 þam gnorniendum, 7 biter eart ðu þam weligum þisse worulde, for þan hie forlætan sceolon hira blissa 7 onfoð unrotnessa. Se de[a]ð ælces yfeles 7 eges [ende is].<sup>74</sup>

(Alas, Death, you are sweet to the wretched and to the poor, and you are pleasant to the sorrowful and to the grieving; and you are bitter to the wealthy of this world, as they must let their bliss go and accept sorrow. Death is the end of all evil and terror).

Denouncing the futility of earthly possessions is surely not unique to this homily, but it is worth noting that the reference to the 'wealthy of this world' is another innovation by the *Vercelli* homilist: Isidore's *Synonyma* only says that 'death is sweet to the wretched ones'.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> PG, xxxiv, col. 389. On this passage, see Introduction, I.5.

<sup>74</sup> Scragg, p. 370, ll. 52-56.

<sup>75</sup> 'O mors, quam dulcis es miseris! o mors, quam suavis es amare uiuentibus! quam iucunda es, o mors, tristibus atque moerentibus! [...] Mors malorum omnium finem imponit, mors

A further element must be taken into account. Dudley suggests that, among the literary material that combined to form the ‘Soul and Body legend’, there is a tale about ‘the way in which a rich man and a poor man die’.<sup>76</sup> According to Batiouchkof, this supposed tale regarding the distinction between the rich man and the poor man could have been influenced by the parable of the rich man and poor Lazarus (Luke 16: 19-31).<sup>77</sup> This tale, conflated with Alexander the Ascetic’s sermon, could have arguably shaped a lost homily where the parting Soul laments the vanity of worldly goods, states how a rich man and a poor man face death, and indicates the body as responsible for its earthly desires but still does not address it directly: all elements that are featured in *Vercelli XXII*. The supposed lost ‘Soul and Body’ material on which the Vercelli homilist could have relied for the Soul’s lament may have been, then, a text belonging to an intermediate phase between the Greek *Macarius Sermon* and the Latin tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’, represented by the *Nonantola Version*. In the light of the ‘Soul and Body legend’ described by Dudley and Batiouchkof, such an intermediate phase is not unlikely; but at the present stage of our knowledge, it is not supported by any manuscript evidence, and its existence can be hypothesised only.

To sum up, the Soul’s lament in *Vercelli XXII* shares enough textual connections with the other passages of the works of ‘type 1’ to be included in the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ material, although, in my opinion, it probably

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calamitati terminum praebet, omnem calamitatem mors adimit’. *Synonyma* I.19-20, quoted in Scragg, p. 370. Zacher, who also spots this innovation, notes a similarity with the invocation to death in *Vercelli IV*, which ‘reads almost as an expansion of the ideas presented in the soul’s address to Death in *Vercelli XXII*’ (Zacher, p. 175).

<sup>76</sup> Dudley, ‘An Early Homily’, p. 252.

<sup>77</sup> Batiouchkof, pp. 53, 532-33. A short Latin poem loosely based on this parable served as a source for a thirteenth-century ‘Soul and Body’ lyric, *Nu þu vnseli bodi up-on bere list* (see Chapter 2.5).



represents an early stage, perhaps the earliest, of the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ tradition.

### 1.3. THE PERIODICAL VISIT OF THE SOUL

Three Old English texts feature several elements differing from the motifs traced in the texts of ‘type 1’. This leads us to the identification of a second sub-group, here designated as ‘type 2’. While the homilies of ‘type 1’ are overall close in form and content, the texts of ‘type 2’ show the adaptability of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ topos. The *Soul and Body* poem, the *Junius Homily*, and the *Augustini Sermo* share a common idea: the soul periodically pays a visit to its body. However, this setting changes in every text: the return is weekly in *Soul and Body*, yearly in the *Augustini Sermo*, unspecified in the *Junius Homily*. Furthermore, the three texts do not accord the same importance to this feature: it is little more than a hint in the *Junius Homily*, whereas it is clearly stated in the *Augustini Sermo* and full details are given in *Soul and Body*.<sup>78</sup> The idea of a periodical return is, nonetheless, of key importance, because it shows the increased influence of the *Visio Pauli* on the Old English tradition; the presence of two different speeches, of both a blessed and a damned soul, also attests this influence.

Otherwise, the three texts have little in common. The address of the soul in *Soul and Body* is close to the ones of ‘type 1’ to some extent; the souls of the *Augustini Sermo* provide a list of good and bad behaviours; the two addresses of the *Junius Homily* feature yet a different strategy, that of the

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<sup>78</sup> See Moffat, p. 32: ‘the poet tells us the soul must visit the body weekly – *symle ymb seofon niht* (10a) – although the day is not specified. The duration of the visit appears to be one night only, because the soul states that it must *hweorfan on honcred* (67a) “depart at cockcrow”. The other interesting detail we discover about the soul’s respite is the seven-day cycle will continue for only three hundred years, unless Judgment Day intervenes (ll. 12-14)’.

rhetorical questions.

The Vercelli-Exeter *Soul and Body*<sup>79</sup> has attracted more attention than any other English work on the same theme. Over the last century, scholars have considered almost every aspect of the poem:<sup>80</sup> its manuscript history,<sup>81</sup> its structure,<sup>82</sup> its theological unorthodoxy,<sup>83</sup> its bodily imagery,<sup>84</sup> and its relationship with the practice of penance.<sup>85</sup> Relevant studies are cited in Moffat's critical edition.

The theological problems raised by the poem are, of course, of no little importance, but they must not be overestimated. The poet unequivocally states

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<sup>79</sup> In the present discussion, I follow Moffat's approach and consider the poem as a single work preserved in two manuscripts, rather than two separate works.

<sup>80</sup> For an overview, see Thomas Alan Shippey, *Poems of Wisdom and Learning in Old English* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1976), pp. 29-36.

<sup>81</sup> See Alison Gyger, 'The Old English *Soul and Body* as an Example of Oral Transmission', *Medium Ævum*, 38 (1969), 239-44; Peter R. Orton, 'Disunity in the Vercelli Book *Soul and Body*', *Neophilologus*, 63 (1979), 450-60; id., 'The OE *Soul and Body*: a Further Examination', *Medium Ævum*, 48 (1979), 173-97.

<sup>82</sup> See Mary Heyward Ferguson, 'The Debate between the Body and the Soul. A Study in the Relationship between Form and Content' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 1965); Ead., 'The Structure of the "Soul's Address to the Body" in Old English', *JEGP*, 69.1 (1970), 72-80, although I find her conclusions on the relationship between *Soul and Body* and the debate tradition unconvincing.

<sup>83</sup> See Kurz, pp. 235-61; Cyril L. Smetana, 'Second Thoughts on *Soul and Body I*', *Mediaeval Studies*, 29 (1967), 193-205; Haynes, pp. 78-97; Michelle Hoek, 'Violence and ideological inversion in the Old English *Soul's Address to the Body*', *Exemplaria*, 10.2 (1998), 271-85.

<sup>84</sup> See Thomas D. Hill, 'Punishment According to the Joints of the Body in the OE *Soul and Body*', *Notes and Queries*, 213 (1969), 409-10; Id., 'Punishment According to the Joints of the Body, Again', *Notes and Queries*, 214 (1969), 246; Glenn Davis, 'Corporeal Anxiety in *Soul and Body II*', *Philological Quarterly*, 87.1-2 (2008), 33-50.

<sup>85</sup> See Allen J. Frantzen, 'The Body in *Soul and Body I*', *The Chaucer Review*, 17.1 (1982), 76-88.

that sins and consequent damnation are all the body's fault. This position, as noted by Shippey, strongly contrasts with Augustine's view that 'peccati causam ex anima, non ex carnem prodissse',<sup>86</sup> "the cause of sin derives from the soul, not from the flesh": 'the point is a fundamental one, both to theology and to the history of debates (rather than diatribes) between body and soul'.<sup>87</sup> Nonetheless, the view that the soul is a prisoner subjected to the body's will – which has itself a long philosophic tradition, descending from Pythagoras and Plato –<sup>88</sup> is not uncommon in Old English literature. A similar conception is exemplified in *Riddle 43* of the Exeter Book, where a "servant", the body, tends ('þenað') a "noble guest" ('æþelum deorne'). The body must serve the guest honourably during their "journey" ('on þam siðfate'). The two are defined as "brothers" and the earth is their "mother and sister".<sup>89</sup> Compared with *Riddle 43*, however, *Soul and Body* takes a grimmer view of the relationship between body and soul: the metaphors are a cage and a prisoner, rather than guest and servant. Kurz sees the sense of horror towards the body as influenced by Catharism, an interpretation rejected by Smetana,<sup>90</sup> who also notes that 'the poet's theme is woe and weal, and he does justice to both'.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Augustine, *De civitate dei*, XIV.3.

<sup>87</sup> Shippey, p. 32.

<sup>88</sup> See Hoek, pp. 272-73.

<sup>89</sup> Edition in George Philip Krapp and Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie, eds, *The Exeter Book*, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, 3 (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1936), p. 204. For a study of this riddle, see Jennifer Neville, 'Pondering the Soul's Journey in Exeter Book Riddle 43', in *The World of Travellers: Exploration and Imagination*, ed. by Kees Dekker, Karin E. Olsen, and Tette Hofstra, *Germania Latina*, 7 (Leuven: Peeters, 2009), pp. 147-62. See also Mona Lynn Logarbo, 'The Body and Soul as Kinsmen: an Explanation of the Theology of the Anglo-Saxon Body-Soul Theme in Terms of an underlying Anglo-Saxon Spirituality of Kinship' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Fordham University, 1986).

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Kurz, pp. 260-61; Smetana, pp. 193-205.

<sup>91</sup> Smetana, p. 205.

Overall, I agree with Shippey's words: 'theologically, the poem is not first-rate. Of course it is doubtful how much the poet was interested in theology'.<sup>92</sup> The theological (un)orthodoxy of the poem is, in my opinion, secondary to the effectiveness of the episode of the 'Soul's Address to the Body', meant to demonstrate the devastating effect of the body's indifference towards the soul's fate.

*Soul and Body* is, in fact, a homily in verse<sup>93</sup> on the role of wisdom, meditation, and the perils of late repentance. The address of the Damned Soul is framed by an introduction of homiletic character and a final description of the body's decay, which is followed, in turn, by an exhortation to reflect on the meaning of the visit of the soul. The opening section immediately defines the meditative focus of the poem (vv. 1-8):

Huru ðæs behofaþ hæleþa æghwylc  
 þæt he his sawle sið sylfa bewitige,  
 hu þæt bið deoplic þon(ne) se deað cymeð,  
 asundrað þa sibbe þa þe ær somud wæron,  
 lic ond sawl(e). Long bið siþþan  
 þæt se gæst nimeð æt gode sylfum  
 swa wite swa wuldor swa him in worulde ær  
 efne þæt eorðfæt ær geworhte.<sup>94</sup>

(Thus, it behoves each man of value to ponder his soul's journey, how worrisome it is when death comes and separates the kinsmen that once were united, body and soul. It is long afterwards that the soul receives from God Himself either punishment or bliss, according to what the earthen vessel gained for it [the soul] in the world before).

These verses have a striking homiletic analogue in the eighth Blickling

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<sup>92</sup> Shippey, p. 33.

<sup>93</sup> On the 'homiletic' content of *Soul and Body*, see Willard, pp. 957-83; Smetana, pp. 193-205.

<sup>94</sup> Moffat, pp. 48. Moffat's edited text is based on the *Exeter Book's* version.

homily, a Rogationtide sermon on the needs of the soul:

Ac hwæt is þæt þæm men sy mare þearf to þencenne þonne embe his sawle þearfe, & hwonne se dæg cume þe he sceole wið þæm lichomon hine gedælon, & hwylce latteowas he hæbbe, & hwyder he gelæded sy, þe to wite, þe to wuldre.<sup>95</sup>

(But what is more necessary for a man to think about than his soul's needs, and of the day that comes when he must separate himself from the body, and which guides he has, and whither he shall be led, either towards punishment or bliss).

If not a common source (the passage in *Blickling VIII* is almost an exact prose equivalent to *Soul and Body*, vv. 1-8), the two texts surely share a similar preoccupation with the urgency of self-amendment and continuous reflection.<sup>96</sup> In *Soul and Body*, the lack of forethought is often stigmatised by the soul: 'lyt þu getohtes' (v. 19b), 'lyt getohtes' (v. 23a; v. 26a), 'þær þu þon(ne) hogode her on life' (v. 42). The conclusion recalls the initial exhortation to wisdom in life (vv. 122b-126):

Þon(ne) biþ þæt werge  
lic acolad þæt he longe ær  
werede mid wædum, bið þonn(ne) wrym(a) giefl,  
æt on eorþan. Þæt mæg æghwylcum

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<sup>95</sup> Morris, p. 97, ll. 10-14. Haines, p. 88, mentions this passage in her discussion on the theological background of the 'Soul's Address to the Body'; see also Ricciardi, p. 84; Moffat, p. 65, does not consider this analogue, but notes that the *wite/wuldor* association 'is common in prose'.

<sup>96</sup> As noted by Di Sciacca, p. 371, the passage in *Blickling VIII* also served as a source for a section of another 'Soul and Body' text, *Assmann XIV*. See Assmann, pp. 164-65, ll. 15-19: 'ac hwæt is þam men betere to þencenne þonne embe his sawle þearfe and hwænne se dæg cume, þe he scyle wið þone lichaman seo sawle gedælan and hwilce ladþeowas heo hæbbe and hwider heo zelædd si, þe to wite, þe to wuldre'.

men to gemyndu(m) modsnottterra.<sup>97</sup>

(When the weary body got cold, that same body that he used to protect with clothes long ago, then it will be food for worms, a feast in the earth.

Every wise man should keep this in mind).

In this homiletic context, a sinner is a man who wastes the faculty of thought (a distinctive human feature), because he does not use it to meditate on the soul's fate. All the other sins (gluttony, pride) descend from this fundamental fault. This aspect is remarked upon in one of the key passages of the poem (vv. 75-85):

Forþon þe wære selle swiþe micle  
þon(ne) þe wæran ealle eorþan spede –  
butan þu hy gedælde dryhtne sylfu(m) –  
þær þu wurde æt (frymðe) fugel oþþe fisc on sæ  
oððe eorþan neat, ætes tiolode,  
feldgongende feoh butan snyttro  
ge on westenne wildra deora  
þ(æt) grimmeste þær swa god wolde,  
ge þeah þu wære wyrmcynna þæt wyrreste,  
þon(ne) þu æfre on moldan mon gewurde  
oþþe æfre fulwihte onfon sceolde.<sup>98</sup>

(It would have been much better for you than all the wealth of the world – unless you had given it to the Lord himself – if you had been originally a bird, or a fish in the sea, or a beast grazing on the land, an ox wandering in the fields without intelligence, or the wildest beast in the wasteland – if God had wanted to – or the worst of the snakes, rather than being a man on earth or having ever received baptism).

This theme – the condition of beasts and, to a lesser extent, of inanimate

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<sup>97</sup> Moffat, p. 60.

<sup>98</sup> Moffat, pp. 56.

objects – was to be developed in the thirteenth-century body and soul Latin debates, alternatively used by either the body or the soul, but with a different focus. In the debates, the ‘happy state’ of beasts will be characterised by the absence of eternal torments and by the fact that body and soul of beasts simultaneously perish, not – as in *Soul and Body* – by the lack of faculty of thought.<sup>99</sup>

This is not the only instance in which *Soul and Body* loosely anticipates motifs that would become *topoi* in the Middle English treatments of the theme.<sup>100</sup> For example, it is said that the body is not loved by any of the living (v. 52), family or kinsmen (vv. 53-54), a concept that will be expanded and developed from Trinity xxix *De Sancto Andrea* onwards, and especially in the thirteenth-century ‘Soul and Body’ works.<sup>101</sup> A reference to ‘treasures’ and ‘gold and silver’ (vv. 57-58) implies that the body was rich in life, although the picture of the sinner is still far from the more refined descriptions of the Early Middle English phase. The main points of accusation towards the body remain its love for food and drinks. In his study of *Soul and Body*, Frantzen observes that the poem is ‘informed by principles derived from the practice of penance’, and that the ideas expressed in the poem ‘are consistent with what medieval Christians believed was necessary to save their souls’.<sup>102</sup> Moreover, as Moffat argues, ‘the Egyptian background of the Soul journey, of which the soul’s address to the body was a part [...] may explain the concentration on

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<sup>99</sup> See Chapter 3.

<sup>100</sup> On the other hand, the Old English *Soul and Body* is perhaps the only poetic treatment of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme lacking the *ubi sunt* motif; see Douglas Moffat, ed., *The Soul’s Address to the Body. The Worcester Fragments* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1987), p. 42.

<sup>101</sup> See Chapters 2.2, 2.3., and 3.5.

<sup>102</sup> Frantzen, p. 77.

gluttony and avarice'.<sup>103</sup> The figure of the sinner is, then, vague enough to allow a wide degree of identification and self-identification, especially in the presumable context of a monastic audience.

Although a direct source has been excluded,<sup>104</sup> the accusation in *Soul and Body*, vv. 39-41, is structured along the same antithetical pattern as the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*:

Wære þu þe wiste wlonc ond wines sæd;  
brymful þunedest ond ic ofþyrsted wæs  
godes lichoman gæstes drinces.<sup>105</sup>

(You were proud of banquets and sated with wine, you boasted majestically and I was thirsty for the body of God, the spirit's drink).

In this instance, *Soul and Body* clearly retains the rhetorical structure of the texts of 'type 1'. The same pattern is employed by the Blessed Soul when it praises the body for having observed fasting in life: vv. 142-144:

Fæstest ðu on foldan and gefyldest me †  
godes lichoman gastes drinces.

Wære ðu on wædle, sealdest me wilna geniht.<sup>106</sup>

You fasted on earth and you filled me up with the body of God, the spirit's drink. You were in poverty and gave me plenty of pleasures).

The speech of the Blessed Soul leads us to an unavoidable issue regarding its authenticity. Against the traditional view of the manuscript transmission of the poem – Vercelli being the most complete copy and Exeter lacking the

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<sup>103</sup> Moffat, 'The Old English Soul and Body', p. 70.

<sup>104</sup> See Moffat, pp. 29-32.

<sup>105</sup> Moffat, p. 52.

<sup>106</sup> Moffat, p. 63. The argument thematically echoes the *Nonantola Version*, in Batiouchkof, p. 578: 'quando tu eras esuriens et siciens, ego repleta cibo et leticia; quando tu eras gracilis et pallidus, ego illaris et leta', "when you were hungry and thirsty, I (was) full of food and joy; when you were lean and pale, I (was) happy and glad".



second part –,<sup>107</sup> Orton has argued that the Blessed Soul section found in Vercelli could be a later addition composed by a different author to ‘balance’ the address of the Damned Soul.<sup>108</sup> In his critical edition, Moffat has carefully discussed the topic and cautiously considered and accepted the possibility of an interpolation in Vercelli:

ll. 125b-6 do bring The Damned Soul to a fitting conclusion and are reminiscent enough of the poem’s opening to lend The Damned Soul portion of the work some structural unity. For the poet to bother with such a statement in the middle of a two-part work strikes me as peculiar. [...] There is not enough evidence to decide finally for or against the authenticity of The Blessed Soul. On balance, however, what evidence there is points toward it being a later, less inspired addition, probably not by the same poet.<sup>109</sup>

Furthermore, as Brent has recently noted, ‘the soul depicted in the first sixteen lines of the poem is never identified as a wicked soul, but only as “se gæst” (9a)’, which would be unusual in a two-part episode: in that case, the poet ‘would have identified the first soul as wicked’.<sup>110</sup>

This view raises some important considerations on the development of the Old English tradition. If *Soul and Body* was originally intended with a single address, it follows that the poem has two of the basic elements of the texts of ‘type 1’: the absence of a praise from a blessed soul and the presence of the antithetical pattern. Therefore, the poem could possibly belong to the same ‘type’ as the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*. The innovation in *Soul and Body* would be the idea of a periodical, weekly respite. One can then suppose that a later author, familiar with the *Redactions* of the *Visio Pauli* or at least

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<sup>107</sup> For example, cf. Willard, p. 977.

<sup>108</sup> See Orton, ‘Disunity in the Vercelli Book’, pp. 450-60.

<sup>109</sup> Moffat, p. 44.

<sup>110</sup> Brent, p. 113.

with the two-speech Latin material, had then added the Blessed Soul to make the poem fit in with this tradition,<sup>111</sup> using expressions and structures found in the early section (such as the antithetical pattern) to ‘build’ the new section.

The verbal parallels between the two sections have led Smetana to see the Vercelli *Soul and Body* as a ‘diptych’; he also claims that ‘the clear enunciation of *swa wite swa wuldor* calls for double treatment’, thus refusing the idea of a later interpolation.<sup>112</sup> However, ‘*swa wite swa wuldor*’ is part of the opening meditation of the poem (v. 7), before the Damned Soul begins its address to the Body, and I do not think that it warrants the inference that two different sections will be treated. Moreover, Brent convincingly points out that ‘verbal echoes [...] do not prove that this is the work of a single author; part two of the poem might, for instance, represent the attempt of a second author to mimic what has come before’.<sup>113</sup> I would go further, arguing that verbal parallels such as ‘*wyrmu(m) to wiste*’ (v. 155), where the Blessed Soul is sorrowful for the state of the body, could represent an attempt by the hypothetical composer of the new section to remedy the absence of a corporeal description analogous to the one found in the earlier part.<sup>114</sup> Such a description, as noted by Frantzen, would have been ‘unthinkable’ in the context of a Blessed Soul that praises a virtuous body and describes the forthcoming joys of heaven.<sup>115</sup>

The passage on decomposition in *Soul and Body* is surely one of the most

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<sup>111</sup> See Brent, p. 118: ‘A more likely scenario is that clerics were familiar with several versions of the address and felt comfortable adding passages from other homilies, omitting undesirable or awkward passages, setting the addresses at different periods of time, and even extemporizing parts of the speeches themselves’.

<sup>112</sup> Smetana, pp. 197-98.

<sup>113</sup> Brent, p. 114.

<sup>114</sup> On this theme, see Cioffi and Rosselli Del Turco, p. 182, who find this passage ‘awkward’.

<sup>115</sup> Frantzen, p. 83.

striking features of the poem. In my view, the appalling description of the physical corruption of the corpse is strictly linked to the motif of the periodical return. In the texts of ‘type 1’ discussed above, the address of the soul to the body is followed by a scene where the demons prick different parts of the soul, each corresponding to a specific sin. In the context of a weekly respite, one can hardly imagine a similar conclusion. Perhaps, to avoid absurdity, the poet of *Soul and Body* (or the author of its supposed lost source) removed the corporeal description based on the devils and turned it into a portrait of the decomposition process, where the worms attacking the body correspond to the devils stinging the soul in *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*. This could also explain why the troop of worms led by Gifer (v. 116) assault the tongue, teeth and eyes (vv. 119-120), which in the Old English homilies were connected to specific sins. The name ‘Gifer’ (“Glutton”) ‘is appropriate for the assailant of this particular body because of the gluttonous behaviour’ he showed in life.<sup>116</sup>

*Soul and Body* is, then, still a critically challenging text. In terms of the division into ‘types’ of the Old English tradition, based on the presence and development of given motifs, this poem still retains many aspects of ‘type 1’, especially if we consider the Blessed Soul section as spurious. Nonetheless, the very possibility of the addition of a section and especially the motif of the periodical visit demonstrate that the poem belongs to a different ‘type’ of text.

The two-speech structure is much more balanced in the two homilies belonging to ‘type 2’. *The Junius Homily* is especially notable for its manuscript context: between fols 2<sup>v</sup>/12<sup>r</sup> of MS Junius 85/86, an Old English rendition of the *Visio Pauli* has been interpolated. As stated above, this text, preserved in fols 3<sup>r</sup>-11<sup>v</sup>, is the only known vernacular translation of the Long Latin version of the *Apocalypse of Paul* recorded in the West. It is evident that

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<sup>116</sup> Kathleen Blumreich-Moore has put forward this idea in a study, to my knowledge still unpublished, cited in Moffat, p. 79.

the copyist, who added some text to connect logically the end of the *Visio* to the *Junius Homily*, felt some kind of thematic unity between the two works.<sup>117</sup>

The *Junius Homily* is perhaps the only Old English prose text entirely based on the ‘Soul and Body’ theme: the two addresses of the Damned and the Blessed souls occupy the whole homily, with little introductory material. The accusation of the Damned Soul is not based on the traditional antithetical pattern, but rather employs a succession of rhetorical questions, ll. 4-10:

Gehyrstu, earma synfulla lichoma, ic cyrre to ðe to ðan þæt ic ðe werge  
and þine ungeleafnesse ðe secge. Forhwon, earma lichoma, lufodes  
ðu þone feond ðæt wæs se diofol? Forhwon lyfdest ðu þæm (ðe)<sup>118</sup> þe  
forlærde þurh synne lustas? Forhwon, earma lichoma, noldest þu  
gelyfan (on þa)m alysende Gode Ælmihtigum, se for ðinum ðingum  
manigfeald wite<sup>119</sup> þrowode?<sup>120</sup>

(Listen, wretched sinful body, I turn to you to curse you and tell about  
your unbelief. Why, wretched body, did you love that foe – that is the  
devil? Why did you believe in him who seduced you with the pleasures  
of sin? Why, wretched body, did you not want to believe in the  
redeemer God Almighty, who endured many torments for you?).

Some rhetorical questions are also found in *Soul and Body*, involving the answers that the body will have to give at the Final Judgment,<sup>121</sup> but the Junius homilist seems to particularly appreciate this pattern. In the climax of its

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<sup>117</sup> See Luiselli Fadda, *Nuove Omelie Anglosassoni*, p. 159; see also Ead., *Una inedita traduzione anglosassone*, p. 483.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Willard, p. 961; Luiselli Fadda, p. 163.

<sup>119</sup> *Manifealgwite* in Luiselli Fadda; I have emended to *manigfeald wite* and omitted the comma before *lyfdest*, following Willard’s text (Willard, p. 961, l. 9); see Peter S. Baker, Review of Anna Maria Luiselli Fadda, *Nuove Omelie Anglosassoni della Rinascenza Benedettina*, *Speculum*, 54.2 (1979), 598-99, at p. 598.

<sup>120</sup> Luiselli Fadda, pp. 163, 165.

<sup>121</sup> See Moffat, p. 58, vv. 93-99.

address to the body, the Damned Soul seem to accept part of the responsibility (ll. 25-35):

þonne cweþ seo sawl: “Wa me, forðæm ic þa awirgedan þinc mid ðe lufode! Wa me, forðam ic ða toweardan þingc ne gemunde! Wa me, forðæm þe ic me helle wite ne ondred! Wa me, forðam þe ic heofona rice ne lufode! Wa me, forðæm þe ic geþafode ealle ða yfel þe þu dydest! Forþon ic nu for ðinum gewyrhtum eom cwylmed, and for þinum yfelum dædum ic eom on helle wite bescofen. Ic wæs Godes dohter and ængla swistor gescapen and þu me hafæst forworht þæt ic eam deofles bearn and deoflum gelic.”<sup>122</sup>

(Then the soul says: ‘Woe is me, for I loved the execrable things with you! Woe is me, for I did not ponder the things to come! Woe is me, for I did not fear the torment of hell! Woe is me, for I did not love the kingdom of heaven! Woe is me, for I allowed all the evil things you did! Therefore, I am now punished because of your deeds, and I am precipitated into the torment of hell because of your evil actions. I was God’s daughter and the sister of angels and you have brought ruin on me so that I am now the devil’s child and akin to devils).

The structure of the monologue of the *Junius Homily* recalls that of the Soul’s lament found in *Vercelli XXII*. In the context of the *Junius Homily*, however, the lament is a further rhetorical strategy to blame the body, although it forces the soul to admit part of the guilt. The Damned Soul states that it will be punished because of the Body’s misdeeds, but it also admits its own lack of forethought and recognises itself to be a partner in crime because of its love of ‘execrable things’. The speech of the Blessed Soul overturns the accusation of the Damned Soul. The body is praised because it was “holy and fruitful” (‘halig lichoma and wæstmberende’, l. 58), “house of God” (‘Godes hus’, l.

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<sup>122</sup> Luiselli Fadda, pp. 165, 167. I have altered Luiselli Fadda’s punctuation: as noted by Baker, p. 599, *forðæm* never introduces a direct question. See also Willard, p. 962, vv. 17-24.

59), and the “sharpest razor” (‘scearpuste scyrsex’, l. 60) that cut away the sins. Interestingly enough, only the Blessed Soul clearly states that it periodically pays visits to the body (ll. 66-67): ‘ic gelomlice cume to þe mid miclum geleafan and mid sibbe’, “I will frequently come to you with much faith and peace”.<sup>123</sup> Such a detail is not mentioned by the Damned Soul. The homilist only writes that ‘æghwylces monnes sawul æfter þisse weorulde scyl gesecegan eft ðane lic(homan)’ (ll. 2-3),<sup>124</sup> “after this world, the soul of each man will seek the body again”, which gives no clear indication of a definite setting but excludes an address at the moment of death.<sup>125</sup>

The details of the periodical return are much clearer in the *Augustini Sermo*, one of the two Old English ‘Soul and Body’ homilies influenced by the tradition of the annual respite. Unlike the *Macarius Homily*, where the address of the soul to the body is set at the moment of death and the Easter respite is only a hint, this homily is clearly framed by the Easter return, ll. 89-91: ‘on þam dæge þe Drihten of deaþe aras, þonne mot anra gehwylces mannes sawl, ge soðfæstes mannes ge synfulles, þa byrgenstowe gesecean þe ðe lichama on aled wæs’,<sup>126</sup> “on the day when the Lord arose from death, the soul of each man, both righteous and wicked, must seek the burying place where the body was laid”. According to Willard, the influence of the *Visio Pauli* is also visible in the order of the two speeches, Blessed Soul first and Damned Soul after, resembling the Long Latin version of the *Visio*. This order is stated even in the sentence that introduces the periodical return, ‘ge soðfæstes

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<sup>123</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 169.

<sup>124</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 163.

<sup>125</sup> Brent, p. 101, takes the opposite view, suggesting that such an ‘oblique reference’ could indicate a ‘post-mortem address’. However, a soul does not have any need to ‘seek’ a body in a deathbed setting.

<sup>126</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 151.

mannes ge synfulles’.

Other key features of the *Augustini Sermo* are its late manuscript date (twelfth century) and its dependence on a known source, a variant of the pseudo-Isidorian *Sermo III*. Unlike the roughly contemporary Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea*, which shows clear Early Middle English elements (as discussed in the next chapter), the *Augustini Sermo* fully belongs to the Old English tradition. As suggested by Murfin, this sermon is a relatively faithful copy of an Old English original, supposedly composed between the late tenth and the early eleventh century.<sup>127</sup> On its Latin source, Murfin notes that the homily ‘is almost certainly translated from a Latin sermon of Pseudo-Isidore, a variant of which is printed as *Sermo III – Homilia* in Migne’, although ‘not, however, a direct translation of the version quoted there’.<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup> See Kathleen M. Murfin, ‘An Unedited Old English Homily in MS. Cambridge, U.L., li. 133’ (unpublished master’s thesis, Rice University, 1971), pp. 5-6. A discussion on the post-Conquest preservation and reuse of Old English homiletic material is not possible here; for an overview, see Seth Lerer, ‘Old English and its Afterlife’, in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 7-34; Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne, eds, *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 30 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); Treharne, Elaine, ‘English in the Post-Conquest Period’, in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed. by Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne (Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) pp. 403-14.

<sup>128</sup> Murfin, pp. 11; on the sources of the homily, see also Willard, pp. 959-60; Luiselli Fadda, p. 139. According to Murfin, pp. 11-12, the *Augustini Sermo* is closer ‘in several instances [...] to Pseudo-Augustine’s three *Sermones ad Fratres in Eremo* LXVI, LXVIII, and LXIX. [...] In several places Camb. has translated Latin phrases which evidently are drawn directly or with very little change from Pseudo-Augustine, and which are expanded, abridged, reworked, or omitted in the version of Pseudo-Isidore which has come down to us via Migne’. Murfin considers, then, the three pseudo-Augustinian sermons to have served as a source for pseudo-Isidore. Nonetheless, it must be remembered that (as noted in the Introduction, I.7) the *Sermones ad fratres in eremo* are now regarded as a thirteenth-century collection. Therefore,

A passage of the opening section of the *Augustini Sermo* is particularly significant. Lines 18-20 focus on the moment of the separation between body and soul, echoing *Soul and Body* and Blickling Homily VIII: ‘eac hit is swiþe uncuð us eallum geongum ge ealdum, hwænne seo tid oððe se dæg sy to cumen þæt se gast weorþe alædd of þam lichaman’,<sup>129</sup> “it is also wholly unknown to us all, young and old, when the time or the day will come when the soul will be taken away from the body”. Notably, the pseudo-Isidorian *Sermo III* does not include this passage, nor does the pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo LXVIII Ad fratres in eremo*. The two Latin homilies feature the representation of a young man who thinks that there will be time to repent when he will grow old; the homilist admonishes the audience that this young man “does not own neither a single hour or a single day” of this life, warning against this ‘pessima securitas’ (“worst self-confidence”). The *Augustini Sermo* closely translates the section, but the passage on the “time or day” when the soul will be separated from the body, inserted after the exhortation against the young man, is an addition, and of no little importance, as it introduces the key theme of the separation of the two elements. On the one hand, as Murfin notes, ‘it seems likely that the author was translating a sermon from Latin to English with some amplification’;<sup>130</sup> on the other hand, this likelihood is surely of interest, because the vernacular author could have used some ‘Soul and Body’-related material to ‘amplify’ this section, in a manner not dissimilar from the homilist of *Vercelli XXII*. However, given the existence of multiple variants of the pseudo-Isidorian *Sermo III*, several of which are still unedited, the safest conclusion would be to assume the existence of another version of

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the relationship between pseudo-Augustine and pseudo-Isidore appears more complex than previously considered and deserves new investigation.

<sup>129</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 145.

<sup>130</sup> Murfin, p. 19.



this sermon, closer to the *Augustini Sermo*, which also includes the passage on the separation of body and soul;<sup>131</sup> it is surely a matter worth further investigation.

Both souls of the *Augustini Sermo* adopt yet another rhetorical strategy, which has not been remarked upon: a list of good and bad actions. For example, in the speech of the Blessed Soul, ll. 102-106:

Soðlice þonne ic wolde þæt ðu fæstest oððe ælnessan sealdest for  
Godes lufan, oððe ænig god wære donde, eall þu þæt dudest: earme þu  
gefrodest, nacode þu scruddest, untrume þu geneosedest, þearfan þu  
feddest; Godes cyrcan gelome þu sohtest.<sup>132</sup>

(Truly when I wanted you to fast, or give alms for God's sake, or do any good deed, you did all of these: you comforted the wretched, you clothed the naked, you visited the sick, you fed the needy; you often visited God's church).

The Soul does not make use of either an antithetical pattern or rhetorical questions: there is, instead, a list of 'good practices' roughly echoing the Seven Works of Mercy as found in Matthew 25.35-36: 'esurivi enim et dedistis mihi manducare sitivi et dedistis mihi bibere hospes eram et collexistis me nudus et operuistis me infirmus et visitastis me in carcere eram et venistis ad me', "for I was hungry, and you gave me to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me to drink; I was a stranger, and you took me in: naked, and you covered me: sick, and you visited me: I was in prison, and you came to me".<sup>133</sup> It is not unlikely that the Gospel passage (where the righteous are called to judgment before the wicked) may also have exerted some kind of

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<sup>131</sup> Brent, p. 106, lists 'at least' other nine manuscript versions of *Sermo III*, noting that two manuscripts 'offer readings closer' to the *Augustini Sermo* than the version printed in Migne, and also promising to offer further discussion on the manuscript variants in a future essay.

<sup>132</sup> Luiselli Fadda, pp. 151, 153.

<sup>133</sup> Douay-Rheims translation.

influence on the order of the two speeches, perhaps ‘reinforcing’ that of the Long *Visio Pauli*. The Damned Soul’s accusation is similarly based on a list of misdeeds that were taught by the devil to the body. Rather than a depiction of a specific sinner, this list looks like a reminder of all the actions that may result in eternal damnation (ll. 129-134):

And æt ærestan he þe lærde mid his folum lotwrencum oferætas and oferdruncennysse and morgenmettas and synlice lustas and stala and þyfþa and lease gewitnessa and morðslyhtas and manaðas and yfel gewit and facn and tælnysa and reaflac and oþer manigfealde yfel þysum ungelice.<sup>134</sup>

(And firstly, with his unwise deceptions, he taught gluttony and drunkenness and morning meals<sup>135</sup> and sinful desires and stealing and thefts and perjuries and murders and false oaths and evil thoughts and deceit and slander and robbery and many other different evil things to you).

In both cases, the actions of the body during lifetime will be rewarded at the Last Judgment. The Domesday imagery is an anticipation of eternal bliss in the Blessed Soul’s speech, ll. 112-116:

Gereste nu on sibbe, and ic eft hwyrfe to þe; and ic þonne mot beon mid

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<sup>134</sup> Luiselli Fadda, pp. 153, 155.

<sup>135</sup> The corresponding passage in Pseudo Isidore’s *Sermo III* has simply ‘manducare’: see PL, LXXXIII, col. 1224. As suggested to me by Professor Bella Millett (pers. comm., 2018), “morning meals” could be a reference to Ecclesiastes 10: 16: ‘vae tibi terra cuius rex est puer et cuius principes mane comedunt’, “Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and when the princes eat in the morning” (Douay-Rheims translation). This biblical verse is quoted in *De duodecim abusivis* (a treaty that was also translated into Old English by Ælfric) under the ninth abuse: see Mary Clayton, ed., *Two Ælfric Texts: The Twelve Abuses and the Vices and Virtues*, Anglo-Saxon Texts, 11 (Cambridge: D.S. Brewer, 2013), p. 128-131, 187. See also *Shroud and Grave*, v. 15 (Chapter 2.5), where the body is rebuked because it “did not want to fast on Friday until noon”.

þe æfre siððen, and þu þonne gesyhst hwylc wuldor and hwylce  
wynsumnesse un(c) togeanes gegearwod hæfð Drihten Hælend Christ  
on þære heofenlican ecan wununge, þar næfre nan ende ne cumð þæs  
wuldres.<sup>136</sup>

(Now rest in peace, and then I shall come back to you, and then I shall  
be allowed to stay with you forever, and then you will see what glory  
and what delight Lord Saviour Jesus has prepared for us in the eternal  
heavenly dwelling, where this glory will never come to an end).

At ll. 138-42, the Damned Soul similarly warns its former companion of their  
journey to Hell after Doomsday:

Forþan, domes dæg is wel neah, þe þu arisan scealt, and ic þonne cume  
to þe, and þu þonne onfehst min mid þinum yfelum dædum þe þu ær  
geworhtest on þisum middanearde, and wyt þonne beoð mid deofle, and  
wyt þar beoð gecwylmede and getintregode butan ælcum ende, æfre to  
worulde.<sup>137</sup>

(Therefore, Doomsday is near, when you shall rise, and then I shall  
come to you, and you shall take me with all the evil deeds you did before  
in this world, and then we both shall be with the devil, and there we  
both shall be in endless punishment and torture, forever).

Given the importance accorded to the Doomsday background in all the Old  
English ‘Soul and Body’ texts, the fact that at least two homilists set the  
‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ at the Last Judgment is not surprising: in  
Willard’s words, this is a ‘natural and inevitable development’.<sup>138</sup>

#### 1.4. DOOMSDAY. *VERCELLI IV*

We could posit a third ‘type’ of Old English ‘Soul and Body’ text, consisting

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<sup>136</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 153.

<sup>137</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 155.

<sup>138</sup> Willard, p. 979.

of the two Old English homilies where the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ is framed by the Final Judgment. In fact, these two homilies significantly differ in style and content and, as I discuss below, each homily can be considered to be an outgrowth of the two ‘types’ previously analysed.

*Assmann XIV* is actually a composite text formed by the collation of two different manuscript versions, usually treated as one work by critics.<sup>139</sup> Willard calls this homily a ‘rambling sort of compilation’ of different scenes, which were reworked – and shortened – by the homilist.<sup>140</sup> The very episode of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ is, in itself, a reduced version of that of the *Junius Homily*.<sup>141</sup> For example, *Assmann XIV* omits both the reference to the Soul as ‘God’s daughter’ found in the *Junius Homily* and, quite obviously, the notion of the ‘frequent’ return. However, both *Assmann XIV* and the *Junius Homily* preserve two addresses in the same order, the damned soul first and the righteous after. Overall, the Judgment Day setting in *Assmann XIV* seems to be of no particular relevance: Willard considers this shift as little more than an ‘arbitrary change of scene’.<sup>142</sup> As Moffat argues, *Assmann XIV* adds little to our knowledge of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature of the Old English phase: the homily is interesting as an example of the adaptability of the episode of the

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<sup>139</sup> See Zacher, p. 146.

<sup>140</sup> Willard, p. 979. See p. 980 for the sources of the homily; see also Brent, pp. 120-21. As shown by Cross, pp. 38-40, the *ubi sunt* passage of *Assmann XIV* is an abridged version of the one preserved in Blickling Homily VIII, which is, in turn, paralleled by another pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo ad fratres in eremo*, number LVIII, in PL, XL, cols. 1341-42. See also Richard Kelly, ed., *The Blickling Homilies: Edition and Translation* (New York: Continuum, 2003), p. 179; Di Sciacca, pp. 371-72. It is worth remembering that the opening section of Blickling VIII is textually close to *Soul and Body*, vv. 1-8 (see above).

<sup>141</sup> Zacher, p. 146.

<sup>142</sup> Willard, p. 979.

‘Soul’s Address to the Body’,<sup>143</sup> and it also shows that the same material has been used and reworked by different homilists. For this reason, *Assmann XIV* can also be considered to directly derive from ‘type 2’.

A very different artistic value has been accorded by critics to the fourth Vercelli homily: ‘one of the most dramatic and successful of all addresses of the soul to the body in Old English literature’;<sup>144</sup> ‘perhaps the most moving presentation of the Last Judgment, and the most effective address of the soul to its body, in Old English Literature’.<sup>145</sup> *Vercelli IV*, with its eschatological emphasis, stands somehow apart from the other ‘Soul and Body’ works.<sup>146</sup> The Doomsday setting of *Vercelli IV* is of key relevance, and provides the basis for a unique feature: the two speeches are delivered in Jesus’ presence. In *Assmann XIV*, which contains a similar scene (‘seo sawel spræcð to þam forworhtan lichaman on domes dæg beforan gode’<sup>147</sup>, “the soul speaks to the sinful body on Doomsday before God”), Jesus was little more than a shadow; in the fourth Vercelli homily, he is an active listener and judge of the soul’s self-confession:

Christ will of course be the final arbiter according to Christian doctrine, and so the shift in scene from a meditation on a deceased person’s interval in time between death and final judgment (as in *Soul and Body*) to the act of final judgment itself immediately places greater importance on the homily’s action. But further, and more subtly, Christ embodies the unity of opposites and serves as an undeniable emblem for the divine acceptance of humanity’s bodily nature within the Christian

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<sup>143</sup> Moffat, p. 34.

<sup>144</sup> Scragg, p. 88.

<sup>145</sup> Willard, p. 983.

<sup>146</sup> Scragg, p. 88.

<sup>147</sup> Assmann, p. 167.

economy.<sup>148</sup>

The two long speeches of *Vercelli IV* show a notable shift from the second to the third person: the Damned and the Blessed Soul only partially address their respective bodies. Following the order stated in the Gospel of Matthew,<sup>149</sup> the Blessed Soul has the first speech: a defence of the many good deeds of its earthly counterpart directed to Christ, the final judge, and modelled after Matthew 25:35-36 (ll. 143-152):

Ær he wæs swiðe gebisgod mid manigfealdum geswincum, þæt he wolde þæt wyt næfdon þa ecan geswinc. Dryhten hælend, he oft wæs dælende ælmessan on þinum naman, þæt he wolde þæt me ne hingrede on ecnesse. He sealde þam þyrstendan dri[n]can, þæt he wolde þæt me ne þyrste on þysse worulde. He wreah þa nacodan þearfan, þæt he wolde þæt me ne cole on þysse worulde. He sealde þam geswenctum mannum reste 7 are, þæt he wolde þæt ic ne swunce on þysse langan worulde. He wæs liðwyrde on þære tide, þe he wolde þæt ic næfre in ecnesse nære mid wordum getyrged.<sup>150</sup>

(Previously he was strongly afflicted with manifold torments, because he did not want us both to have eternal torment. Lord Saviour, he often distributed alms in your name, because he did not want me to suffer hunger in eternity. He gave the thirsty to drink, because he did not want me to suffer thirst in this world. He clothed the naked in need, because he did not want me to be cold in this world. He gave afflicted men rest and mercy, because he did not want me to be afflicted in this long-lasting world. He was of gentle speech in that time, because he did not want me to be abused with words in eternity).

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<sup>148</sup> Jacob Riyeff, 'Dualism in Old English Literature: The Body-and-Soul Theme and *Vercelli Homily IV*', *Studies in Philology*, 112.3 (2015), 453-68, at p. 464.

<sup>149</sup> It is perhaps of no little importance that both the Old English texts that closely recall Matthew 25 (the *Augustini Sermo* and *Vercelli IV*) feature the Blessed-Damned order.

<sup>150</sup> Scragg, p. 96.

After the Blessed Soul has spoken, and Jesus has pronounced his judgment, it is the turn of the Damned Soul for accusation. The introductory section of the Damned Soul's address to the body, as noted by Rieff, 'recalls sentiment and vocabulary found in *Soul and Body*',<sup>151</sup> ll. 203-210:

Ic wæs gast fram Gode on þe sendeð, 7 ðu wære eorðan lames. Wa þe a in ecnesse! For hwan swenctest ðu me, 7 wlenctest þe in þ[ær]e sceortan tide 7 forgeate me, 7 þas langan woruld ne gemundest? Wa me þæt ic þin efre owiht cuðe, swa unsoften swa ic on þe eardude! La, ðu eorðan lamb 7 dust 7 wyrma gifel, 7 þu wambscyldiga fætels 7 gealstor 7 fulnes 7 hræw, hwig forgeate ðu me 7 þa toweardan tide? Ne bepohtest þu no hu ic on ecnesse lifian sceolde.<sup>152</sup>

(I was a soul sent to you from God, and you were earthly clay. Woe to you in eternity! Why did you afflict me, and exalt yourself in that short time and forget me, and why did you not bear in mind the long-lasting world? Woe is me that I never knew anything about you, so in discomfort when I dwelled in you! Lo, you earthly clay and dust and food for worms, and gluttonous vessel and pus and foulness and corpse, why did you forget me and the future time? You did not think how I shall have to live in eternity).

The textual similarities between the fourth Vercelli homily and the Vercelli-Exeter poem have often been taken into account by scholars, although a direct influence of one text on the other has always been excluded.<sup>153</sup> In the following section of *Vercelli IV*, the address has become a narrative in the third person, but the Damned Soul invokes Death and not Jesus (ll. 221-249); the

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<sup>151</sup> Rieff, p. 459.

<sup>152</sup> Scragg, p. 98.

<sup>153</sup> See Moffat, p. 34; Cioffi and Rosselli Del Turco, p. 183. The two texts also share the emphasis on intelligence as a distinctive human element, l. 77: 'lytel is betwyth mannum 7 nytenum butan andgite', "there is little between men and beasts but the intellect".

soul then lists the many misbehaviours of the ‘earthly clay’ (ll. 254-262):

Ʒa he fedde his lichoman orenlicost mid smeamettum, Ʒa geearnode he me Ʒæs ecan hungres. Ʒa he swiðost his lichoman drencte unrihttidum, Ʒa earnode he me Ʒæs ecan Ʒurstes. Ʒa he his lichoman in idelnesse glengde mid hrægle, Ʒa earnode he me Ʒære ecan næcede. Ʒa he oftost tesoword spræc in his onmedlan gælpettunga, Ʒa earnode he me Ʒære mæsta[n] gestynþo 7 Ʒara mæstan benda. Ʒa he swiðust ofermodgode, Ʒa geearnode he me Ʒære ecan niðrunga. Ʒa he swiðust oðre men mid tesowordum tæl[d]e in his renceo, Ʒa earnode he me ææs ecan teonan.<sup>154</sup>

(When he fed immoderately his body with delicacies, then he earned eternal hunger for me. When he drank heavily at inappropriate times, then he earned eternal thirst for me. When he adorned his body with garments in vanity, then he earned eternal nakedness for me. When he most often spoke words of injury in his boastful talking, then he earned the greatest coercion and the greatest bonds for me. When he was most proud, then he earned eternal humiliation for me. When, in his pride, he greatly rebuked other men with words of injury, then he brought eternal vexation upon me).

The invocation to Death (‘Eala, ðu deað’, l. 248) is a feature shared with *Vercelli XXII*. In the fourth Vercelli homily, it is also an effective rhetorical strategy: presumably a Damned Soul cannot directly address Christ. The deeds mentioned by the Damned Soul are mostly the same as in Matthew 25.42-43, almost in the same order<sup>155</sup> and developed through the antithetical pattern

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<sup>154</sup> Scragg, p. 100.

<sup>155</sup> See Matthew 25.42-43: ‘esurivi enim et non dedistis mihi manducare sitivi et non dedisti mihi potum hospes eram et non collexistis me nudus et non operuistis me infirmus et in carcere et non visitastis me’; ‘For I was hungry, and you gave me not to eat: I was thirsty, and you gave me not to drink. I was a stranger, and you took me not in: naked, and you cover me not: sick



typical of the texts of ‘type 1’. The antithetical pattern is a central strategy in *Vercelli IV*: it is used in the introductory section of the homily (ll. 1-56), with a series of contrasts between this world and the eternal life, and it is also employed when the homilist introduces the Doomsday theme (ll. 104-115).<sup>156</sup>

The homily shares other motifs with the texts of ‘type 1’: the ‘changing of colour’ and the presence of the devil that claims the damned soul as his own (ll. 295-302). The motif of the ‘changing of colour’ is of particular interest; as Frantzen puts it, ‘the body becomes an emblem of the soul when Christ pronounces judgment. The good soul’s body shines like precious stones, while the evil body turns dark’.<sup>157</sup> Notably, in *Vercelli IV*, the metamorphosis affects not only the damned body, but also the damned soul, ll. 290-293:

Hwylum he bið swiðe laðlicum men gelic, þonne wannað he 7 doxaþ;  
oðre hwile he bið blæc 7 æ/hiwe; hwylum he bið collsweart. 7 gelice sio  
sawl hiwað on yfel bleoh swa same swa se lichoma, 7 bið gyt wyrsan  
hiwes.<sup>158</sup>

(For a moment it looks like a loathsome man, then it turns to dark and becomes black; for a moment it is pale, and dark; then black as coal. And similarly the soul turns to evil colours, as the body does, and to an even worse form).

Hall and Zacher claim that an ultimate source for this passage has not been yet found; however, there is a significant parallel in the third of Cassian’s *Conferences*, ‘where virtue and sin are said to cloak the soul and give it its

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and in prison, and you did not visit me” (Douay-Rheims translation). Both the Blessed and the Damned souls add the concept of mildness of speech and omit visiting those in prison.

<sup>156</sup> As mentioned above, the introductory section of *Vercelli IV* is an expansion of that of the *Macarius Homily*. The source for the passage of the *Macarius Homily* is, in turn, Ephrem Latinus’ *De Pænitentia*; see Wright, 210-34.

<sup>157</sup> Frantzen, p. 83.

<sup>158</sup> Scragg, pp. 101-02.

bright or dark colour'.<sup>159</sup> In the entire 'Soul and Body' corpus, the idea that the metamorphosis affects also the soul, and not only the body, is unique to this homily.<sup>160</sup>

In spite of its peculiarities, elements like the antithetical pattern, the presence of the devils and the 'changing of colour' suggest that *Vercelli IV* descends from the same homiletic *milieu* as the texts of 'type 1', a background that has been then strongly reworked by a particularly talented and inspired homilist. Notably, *Vercelli IV* also includes some elements that become 'Soul and Body' commonplaces from the Early Middle English phase onwards. The *ubi sunt* passage of *Vercelli IV*, unlike that of *Assmann XIV*, the *Macarius Homily* and the *Augustini Sermo*, is part of the Damned Soul's accusation, and not an introductory meditation made by the homilist (ll. 267-273):<sup>161</sup>

Hwær is þin miht 7 þine strengo 7 þin anmedla 7 þin mycle mod 7 þine  
 renceo 7 þin onwald 7 þine oferhido 7 þin blis, butan eall þis þe wearð  
 to nahte siððan ic of ðe ute wearð? Nahte nan freond þin siððan nane  
 lufe to þe, ne fæder ne moder ne broðor ne swystor ne nan mæg ne  
 lufode þe, siððan deað unc todæled hæfde. Ne lufode þe þæt ðu ær

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<sup>159</sup> Zacher, p. 197. For a detailed analysis of this motif, see Thomas N. Hall, 'The Psychedelic Transmogrification of the Soul in Vercelli Homily IV', in *Time and Eternity: The Medieval Discourse*, ed. by Gerhard Jaritz and Gerson Moreno-Riaño, International Medieval Research, 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 309-22. According to Hall, p. 321, the Cassian passage 'has been combined with the image of the luminescence of the blessed soul established by Matthew 13.43, and with a more vaguely defined concept of the passage of the disembodied soul through several ascending or descending stages, and these combines images have been transferred from the soul to the body, which is, after all, the soul's twin'.

<sup>160</sup> This is also the only 'Soul and Body' text where the way in which the body died is suggested (ll. 215-217): 'þonne ic geseah þin ehtan mid sperum 7 mid swyrde oððe mid stenge, þonne fagnode ic þæs, þy me lyste þæt ic wære ute of ðe'; "when I saw you pursued with spear and with sword or with staff then I rejoiced, because I wished I were out of you".

<sup>161</sup> See Di Sciacca, p. 373.

swiðost lufodest: ðin wif 7 þine bearn þe feodon 7 laðetton.<sup>162</sup>

(Where is your might and your strength and your pomp and your great pride and your vanity and your power and your arrogance and your joy, that did not all turn to nothing since I went out of you? Since then, not a single friend had any love for you: since death divided us, neither father nor mother nor brother nor sister nor any kinsman loved you. Nor did the ones you loved the most love you: your wife and your child hated and execrated you).

The hatred of family and friends, the emphasis on pride and the inclusion of the *ubi sunt* passage in the ‘Soul’s Address’ are all elements found and further developed in the ‘Soul and Body’ works from the late twelfth century, as discussed in the next chapter. It is not unlikely that the passage of *Vercelli IV* exerted an influence on the subsequent treatment of the theme: the fact that at least one of the three manuscript copies of the homily dates from the twelfth century suggests that the text was felt as useful and enjoyable after the Conquest.<sup>163</sup>

### 1.5. CONCLUSIONS

The texts studied in this chapter show the existence of a dominant tradition within the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ *corpus*, that of the texts of ‘type 1’: the topos of the address of the Damned Soul to its body at the moment of death, developed through an antithetical pattern, with the accompanying elements of the presence of the devils and the ‘changing of colour’. Because

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<sup>162</sup> Scragg, pp. 100-01.

<sup>163</sup> MS CCCC 41 has been dated to the eleventh century and MS CCCC 367 to the twelfth century. A section of *Vercelli IV* was also used in the eleventh-century eschatological homily *Napier xxx*; see Donald G. Scragg, ‘Napier’s “Wulfstan” Homily xxx: Its Sources, Its Relationship to the Vercelli Book and Its Style’, *Anglo-Saxon England*, 6 (1977), 197-211, at pp. 203, 209; see also Hall, p. 311.

of the derivation of both the deathbed setting and these latter accompanying elements from the Latin tradition, it is hardly surprising that these motifs were comparably fixed. The fact that this ‘type’ can be considered the main form is proven by the occurrence of its typical motifs in other texts of the same period such as those of ‘type 2’ (otherwise characterised by the presence of the Blessed Soul and the recurring visit of the soul) and ‘type 3’ (characterised by the presence of the Blessed Soul and the Judgment Day setting), as well as in later treatments of the theme. As will be considered in Chapter 2, all the texts of the Early Middle English phase set the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ in a modified version of the deathbed scene: not *at the moment* of death, but in a *post-mortem* context. Moreover, all but one<sup>164</sup> discard the Blessed Soul’s section. Although I do not think that a direct dependence between the surviving Old English works and the Early Middle English ones exists, the most influential treatment seems to be that in *Vercelli IV*. Features of the fourth Vercelli homily that have become widespread in the Early Middle English phase are the *ubi sunt* questions embedded in the address of the soul, the emphasis on pride, and the many sins ascribed to the body. Obviously, the Early Middle English texts also include some new features that make for a different and distinctive tradition, as I argue in the next chapter.

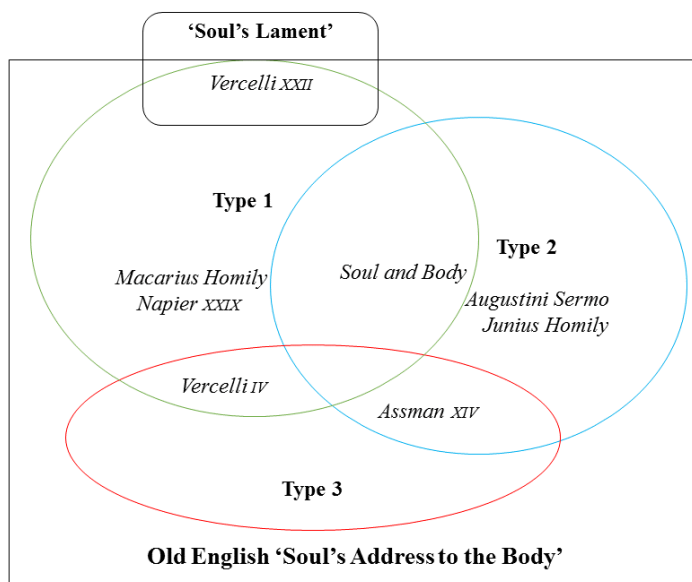
In my opinion, the development of the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ theme can be summed up as follows. At a very early stage, recorded in *Vercelli XXII*, a Damned Soul laments, at the moment of death, its life devoted to sins. In the subsequent phase, this lament was turned into an accusation of the body by the soul. This accusation is still framed by a deathbed scene in which the devils are waiting to drag the soul to hell and the body undergoes a visible metamorphosis. This stage is preserved in the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier*

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<sup>164</sup> The Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea*, which shows both earlier and contemporary features, as discussed in the next chapter, 2.2.

XXIX, but also influenced the Vercelli-Exeter *Soul and Body* poem and the fourth Vercelli Homily. Later in the Old English phase, a renewed interest in the *Visio Pauli*, which followed the composition and circulation of the first Latin *Redactions* of the apocrypha, inspired some homilists to set the ‘Soul’s Address’ in the context of a periodical visit of the soul and to re-develop a positive counterpart to the Damned Soul. The Blessed Soul section was, moreover, a feature of the original ‘Soul and Body Legend’, also preserved in Latin analogues such as the *Nonantola Version* and pseudo-Isidore *Sermo III*. The earliest example of the influence of the *Redactions* could be *Soul and Body*, which still retains many elements of the deathbed stage; full evidence is given by the *Junius Homily* and the *Augustini Sermo*. A roughly parallel tendency is the use of the Doomsday setting, which is consistent with the central importance accorded to the Last Judgment imagery in the ‘Soul and Body’ theme. The relationship between the three ‘types’ can be graphically represented as in Figure 1.1.

**Figure 1.1. The three ‘types’ of Old English ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’**



Although one must be cautious in making too much of the relative dates of the texts and of their manuscripts, the textual and manuscript evidence is consistent with this reconstruction. The *Macarius Homily* is preserved in a post-Conquest manuscript, but an earlier version has surely inspired the compiler of *Napier XXIX* and *Vercelli IV*: the date of composition must be, then, earlier than the first attestation of this latest homily, the late tenth-century *Vercelli Book*. The roughly contemporary *Exeter Book*, where the earliest copy of *Soul and Body* is found, can be taken as a *terminus post quem* for the renewed influence of the *Visio Pauli*. The two homilies of ‘type 2’ are preserved only in post-Conquest manuscripts; if we accept Murfin’s hypothesis, the *Augustini Sermo* should be a copy of a lost original no earlier than the end of the tenth century. Nothing is known about the composition of the *Junius Homily* except its manuscript date (middle of the eleventh century). *Assmann XIV* contains a passage derived from *Junius Homily* and must therefore postdate it (in fact, the two surviving manuscript copies of *Assmann XIV* are both dated from the beginning of the twelfth century). Overall, it is possible that the ‘Soul and Body’ theme in England took its basic form, and was then altered, in a relatively brief period, not more than a hundred years, with the tenth century as its key moment of development.

Perhaps the most interesting element of the manuscript history is the fact that many sermons are preserved in post-Conquest copies. As noted in the case of *Vercelli IV*, this shows that the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ was felt as didactically interesting for preaching purposes in the Early Middle English phase.

## CHAPTER 2. THE EARLY MIDDLE ENGLISH PHASE

### 2.1. THE EARLY MIDDLE ENGLISH ‘SOUL AND BODY’ LITERATURE: OVERVIEW

In this chapter, I shall discuss a body of texts, probably composed after the Conquest and preserved in manuscripts that date from the twelfth to the end of the thirteenth century, which retain and develop the theme of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’. Although still featuring a mute body that is not allowed to reply, the works belonging to this phase (roughly spanning the chronological boundaries of Early Middle English literature) are somewhat different from their Old English ancestors. As I aim to show, these texts are characterised by the presence of some motifs not found in their Old English counterparts: the *post-mortem* setting, the description of the preparation of the burial, the ‘Signs of Death’, and a more detailed representation of the figure of the sinner.

As an effective and versatile reflection on the themes of death and of late repentance, the ‘Soul and Body’ theme readily absorbed different influences across the centuries. This is particularly true for the texts of the Early Middle English phase, which, as noted by Woolf, were informed by contemporary religious lyrics on death:

In the twelfth century a development took place in the Body and Soul tradition – a development perhaps even more important than the transformation of monologue into dialogue – whereby the theme, instead of being a short and isolated anecdote, became a large and flexible framework, with all the traditional death themes accumulated into the reproach of the soul.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 93.

The ‘accumulation’ of these death themes, to use Woolf’s phrase, is not without consequence for the development of this genre. In my view, these new themes transformed the twelfth- and thirteenth-century ‘Soul’s Address’ texts to such an extent that the Early Middle English tradition became clearly distinguishable from the Old English phase.<sup>2</sup> In other words, the Early Middle English ‘Soul’s Address’ works form a distinct group, characterised by the recurrence of themes such as the ‘Signs of Death’ and burial imagery, in the context of a development of the ‘Soul’s Address’ structure into a larger framework (as argued by Woolf).

The distinctive elements of the Early Middle English ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ can be summarised as follows. In the Old English phase, the ‘Soul’s Address’ was set either at the moment of death, or on Judgment Day, or at some intermediate time between death and Doomsday. The works discussed in this

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<sup>2</sup> As mentioned in Chapter 1.1 and 1.5, some ‘Soul’s Address’ homilies usually treated as part of the Old English tradition are actually preserved only in post-Conquest manuscripts: the *Augustini Sermo* in CUL, MS li.1.33, fols. 207<sup>r</sup>-211<sup>r</sup>, second half of the twelfth century, the *Macarius Homily* in CCCC, MS 201, pp. 222-230, middle of the eleventh century, and both copies of *Assmann XIV*, in CCCC, MS 302, pp. 73-78, early twelfth century and London, BL, MS Cotton Faustina A.ix, fols. 23<sup>v</sup>-27<sup>v</sup>, early twelfth century). Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 113, which includes *Napier XXIX*, and Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 85/86, which includes the *Junius Homily*, were compiled after the Conquest. To these manuscripts, a post-Conquest copy of *Vercelli IV* must be added, preserved in CCCC, MS 367, part II, fol. 25, twelfth century. All of these texts could have conceivably been copied from earlier, Old English sources: at least the case of *Vercelli IV*, preserved in three manuscripts, proves that the extant transmission likely represents the survival of a more extended tradition. However, the very existence of post-Conquest vernacular copies of ‘Soul and Body’ works demonstrates that some eleventh-twelfth century scribes felt that these texts were usable and worthy of preservation. See Eleanor Kellogg Heningham, ‘Old English Precursors of the *Worcester Fragments*’, *PMLA*, 55.2 (1940), 291-307, at p. 302; Dorothy Ina Haines, ‘Rhetorical Strategies in Old English Prose: A Study of Three Dramatic Monologues’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, 1998), pp. 52-61; Justin J. Brent, ‘The Legend of Soul and Body in Medieval England’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, State University of New York, 2000), pp. 187-88.



chapter are all set *after* the moment of death. In the older deathbed tradition, the Soul, afraid of leaving the Body, starts its complaint while the body is giving up the ghost; in the Early Middle English phase, the address always follows the body's death and, especially in the texts of the thirteenth century, the preparation for its burial. This shift of setting is probably one of the main influences of the contemporary lyrics of death on the 'Soul and Body' literature: it is the result of the 'accumulation' of other 'death themes'.

A typical Early Middle English 'death theme' is the motif of the 'Signs of Death': a depiction of the failing senses – e.g. the clinical symptoms preceding the *exitum*.<sup>3</sup> This depiction is usually followed by other contemporary topics such as the description of the burial activities, the motif of the paltriness of the grave and/or the theme of the indifference of friends and relatives towards the fate of the soul.<sup>4</sup> Friends and heirs are also often described by the soul as eager to ravage the body's property.

The increased attention on the body's wealth is strictly related to the development of a new, more detailed characterisation of the sinner. In the Old English texts, the damned body's sins (gluttony, stinginess) are vague enough to allow for general identification, and almost nothing is said about the sinner and his life. From the Early Middle English phase onwards, the range of sins is extended (to include vanity, pride, and sloth) and the picture of the sinner is less unclear: he is portrayed as a member of a higher class, devoted to worldly pleasures like rich clothes, good food, beautiful lovers, and horses.<sup>5</sup> These

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<sup>3</sup> A similar motif – the 'Signs of the Old Age' – is found in several Old English texts. See Woolf, pp. 102-03; Arnold B. Van Os, *Religious Visions. The Development of the Eschatological Elements in Mediaeval English Religious Literature* (H.J. Paris: Amsterdam, 1932), p. 185.

<sup>4</sup> See Woolf, p. 94.

<sup>5</sup> This development in the figure of the sinner will find its highest expression in the 'Soul and Body' debate phase, with the 'modi kniȝt' of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyȝt* (see Chapter 3.5).

features are explicit in the *ubi sunt* passages, which are now part of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’, and not a preamble by the homilist as in the Old English homilies.<sup>6</sup>

The present chapter owes a great debt to Rosemary Woolf’s book on the English religious lyric of the Middle Ages and Douglas Moffat’s critical edition of the *Worcester Fragments*.<sup>7</sup> Both these studies identify and discuss the background and interconnections of the ‘Soul and Body’ poetic works of the Early Middle English phase: the poems *Worcester Fragments* and *Latemest Day* and the short lyrics *Nu þu vnseleli bodi* and *Shroud and Grave*. To these texts, I believe, must be added the Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea*, which can be considered as a transitional text because of its unique combination of earlier and contemporary motifs. For this reason, the first section of this chapter is devoted to a comprehensive study of the Trinity sermon *De Sancto Andrea*.

## 2.2. THE CASE OF TRINITY HOMILY XXIX *DE SANCTO ANDREA*<sup>8</sup>

*De Sancto Andrea* is the twenty-ninth sermon of the collection preserved in Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.52, fols 71<sup>v</sup>/6-75<sup>v</sup>/11, from the end of the

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<sup>6</sup> The notable exception is *Vercelli IV*, which is – as noted in Chapter 1.4 – the only Old English ‘Soul and Body’ text featuring an *ubi sunt* passage as part of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’. See Claudia Di Sciacca, ‘The *Ubi Sunt* Motif and the Soul-and-Body Legend in Old English Homilies: Sources and Relationships’, *JEGP*, 105.3 (2006), 365-87, at p. 373. As Di Sciacca notes, p. 374, ‘in this respect, the address in *Vercelli IV* anticipates future developments of the soul-and-body theme in Middle English’.

<sup>7</sup> Douglas Moffat, ed., *The Soul’s Address to the Body. The Worcester Fragments* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1987).

<sup>8</sup> An extended version of this section has been published as Claudio Cataldi, ‘Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea* between Tradition and Innovation’, *Anglia*, 135.4 (2017), 641-68.

twelfth century.<sup>9</sup> Although Trinity XXIX includes only a brief passage on St Andrew in the opening section,<sup>10</sup> the homily can be considered one of the four Old and Early Middle English homilies related to the cult of the Apostle.<sup>11</sup> Unlike the other Andrew homilies, which are hagiographic in nature and strongly

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<sup>9</sup> Edition in Richard Morris, ed., *Old English Homilies of the Twelfth Century. From the Unique Ms. B. 14. 52 in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge*, EETS, OS 53 (London: Trübner, 1873), pp. 172-85. Digitised manuscripts available on 'Cambridge, Trinity College, B.14.52', Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, *The James Catalogue of Western Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Trinity College Library, 2013-2018), <<http://trin-sites-pub.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?index=200>>, last accessed October 2018.

<sup>10</sup> Morris, pp. 173, 175, ll. 1-3, 1-16.

<sup>11</sup> The other texts are Ælfric's homily on St Andrew (*CH I.XXXVIII*), edited in Peter A.M. Clemoes, ed., *Ælfric's Catholic Homilies. The First Series*, EETS, SS 17 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), pp. 507-19; the so-called *Legend of St Andrew* preserved in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 198, ff. 386<sup>r</sup>-394<sup>v</sup>, edited in Frederick G. Cassidy and Richard N. Ringler, eds, *Bright's Old English Grammar and Reader*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed (New York: Holt Reinhart and Winston, 1971), pp. 203-19; and *Blickling Homily xviii* (Princeton, University Library, W.H. Scheide Collection 71, fols. 271-278), number XIX in Morris: Richard Morris, ed., *The Blickling Homilies of the Tenth Century, with a Translation and Index of Words, together with The Blickling Glosses*, 3 vols, EETS, OS 58, 63, and 73 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1874-1880; repr. as 1 vol., 1967), pp. 228-50; a more recent edition is in Richard J. Kelly, ed., *The Blickling Homilies: Edition and Translation* (New York: Continuum, 2003), pp. 158-63. The latter two texts, inspired by the apocryphal *Acta Andreae et Matthiae apud Anthropophagos*, are believed to descend from a common source: see Mary Swan, 'Cambridge, Corpus Christi College 198 and the Blickling Manuscript', *Leeds Studies in English*, 37 (2006), 89-100. To these four prose works must be added the Old English poem *Andreas*, edited in George Philip Krapp, ed., *The Vercelli Book*, Anglo-Saxon Poetic Records, 2 (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1932), pp. 3-51, and the Middle English *Martyrdom of St Andrew* in the *South English Legendary*, edited in E. Gordon Whatley, Anne B. Thompson, and Robert K. Upchurch, eds, *Saints' Lives in Middle English Collections*, TEAMS Middle English Texts Series (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2004), pp. 21-38.

influenced by apocryphal sources,<sup>12</sup> this homily belongs to the tradition of biblical exegesis. The Gospel's episode of the 'forsaking of the nets' (Matthew 4.18-20), where Jesus asks Peter and Andrew to follow him and fish for the souls of men, is commented on, expanded, and used by the Trinity homilist as a starting point for a moral sermon on the transience of the worldly life, a transiency which he represents by the ever-moving sea. The homily incorporates, translates, and comments on Latin material, a feature shared by other texts in the Trinity collection.<sup>13</sup> Toward the end of the text, the homilist introduces a passage on the soul's departure from the dead body.

Although mentioned in Batiouchkof's study, the 'Soul and Body' passage in *De Sancto Andrea* has received little attention.<sup>14</sup> However, one particular aspect of this passage has recently been discussed by scholars. Wymer has discovered that the Damned Soul's speech is a poetic fragment: it features two long alliterative verses (alliterating on /h/ + vowel and on /w/ respectively) followed

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<sup>12</sup> See my study on the figure of the Apostle in the Old English tradition: Claudio Cataldi, 'St. Andrew in the Old English Homiletic Tradition', in *Hagiography In Anglo-Saxon England: Adopting and Adapting Saints' Lives into Old English Prose (c.950-1150)*, ed. by Loredana Lazzari, Patrizia Lendinara, and Claudia Di Sciacca, Fédération Internationale des Instituts d'Études Médiévales, Textes et Études du Moyen Âge 73 (Barcelona-Madrid: Brepols, 2014), pp. 293-308.

<sup>13</sup> See Bella Millett, 'The Discontinuity of English Prose: Structural Innovation in the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies', in *Text and Language in Medieval English Prose: A Festschrift for Tadao Kubouchi*, ed. by Akio Oizumi, Jacek Fisiak, and John Scathill, Studies in English Medieval Language and Literature, 12 (Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2005), pp. 129-50; Stephen Pelle, 'Embedded Latin Verses in Trinity Homily XXIX', *Notes and Queries*, 60.4 (2013), 491-92, at p. 492.

<sup>14</sup> See Theodor Batiouchkof, 'Le Débat de l'Ame et du Corps', *Romania*, 20 (1891), 1-55, 513-78, at p. 46. The passage is also briefly discussed by Van Os, pp. 199-200.

by five rhyming couplets.<sup>15</sup> Millett<sup>16</sup> has also noted that the passage immediately preceding the rhyming fragment is in an alliterative and rhythmical prose drawing on Old English tradition.<sup>17</sup> In a recent contribution on the homily, Pelle has shown that the two Latin introductions of the addresses are also poetic lines: two dactylic hexameters.<sup>18</sup> The ‘Soul and Body’ passage of Trinity XXIX combines, then, alliterative verses, rhythmical prose, rhyming couplets, and Latin verses, in a prosodic mix that closely echoes the *Worcester Fragments*, as noted by Wymer.<sup>19</sup> The homily also stands as an early example of English *prosimetrum* in which both

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<sup>15</sup> Kathryn Wymer, ‘A Poetic Fragment on the Soul’s Address to the Body in the Trinity Homilies’, *Notes and Queries*, 55.4 (2008), 399-400. The two alliterative lines translate the preceding Latin line. The practice of alliteration on /h/ + vowel is a distinctive Early Middle English feature: in Old English prosody /h/ alliterated with itself only. See James Parker Oakden, *Alliterative Poetry in Middle English. The Dialectical and Metrical Survey* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1930), p. 162; see also Donka Minkova, *Alliteration and Sound Change in Early English*, Cambridge Studies in Linguistics, 101 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 19. The inclusion of alliterative passages or rhythmical prose is certainly not unknown to English homilists; for example, Homilies x and xxi of the *Vercelli Book* include alliterative passages: see Charles D. Wright, ‘More Old English Poetry in Vercelli Homily xxi’, in *Early Medieval Texts and Interpretations: Studies presented to Donald G. Scragg*, ed. by Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser (Tempe, AZ: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 2002), pp. 245-62.

<sup>16</sup> Pers. comm., 2016.

<sup>17</sup> The most outstanding examples are Ælfric’s and Wulfstan’s rhythmical prose: see John C. Pope, ed., *Homilies of Ælfric: A Supplementary Collection*, 2 vols, EETS, OS 259, 260 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1967-1968), I, pp 105-36; Bella Millett, ‘The Saints’ Lives of the Katherine Group and the Alliterative Tradition’, *JEGP*, 87.1 (1988), 16-34.

<sup>18</sup> See Stephen Pelle, ‘Embedded Latin Verses in Trinity Homily XXIX’, *Notes and Queries*, 60.4 (2013), 491-492.

<sup>19</sup> Wymer, p. 400. Moffatt, p. 26, defines the metre of the *Worcester Fragments* a ‘prosodical hybrid’.

alliterative and rhyming lines are embedded in prose.<sup>20</sup> I now quote the ‘Soul and Body’ passage of Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea*:

Dan þe sowle fundeð to faren ut of hire licame,  
hie tuneð to hire fif gaten and penneð wel faste,  
and here wiken he(m) binimeð þe hie ar noteden:  
Eien here sene and earen he[re] luste;  
nose here sneuenge and muð here smel.  
Toðen here grind, and tunge here speche;  
and alle limen hie binimed mihte to friðende.  
Gief þe licame was rih[t]wis on þisse liue, wo beð þe sowle þanne hie him  
shal forleten and rewliche biginneð, and þus to him seið:  
*‘Heu dilecta michi caro, quod te ponere cogor!’*  
Awi leof ware þu me! Nu ich shal þe forleten;  
þu ware me lastful on alle þo þe ich wolde.  
We ware onmode Godes wille to done.  
Hwu shal ich oflonged wiðute þe libben!’  
And gief þe licame bed euel, loð is heo þe sowle,  
and hire þuncheð lang þat hie o[n] hi(m) bileueð,  
and hie þencheð fastliche þar offe to witen:  
hit þinche[ð] hire let, for hire is loð þar-inne.  
Ðane biginneð hie rewliche, and to þe licame swilche wordes seið:  
*‘Heu michi cur olidum fueram tibi uincta cadauer!’*  
Aweilewei þu fule hold þat ich auere was to þe iteied!  
Longe habbe ich on þe wuned swo wo is me þe hwile!

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<sup>20</sup> The first example of English vernacular *prosimetrum* where rhyming couplets are embedded in prose is probably *The Rime of King William* of the *Peterborough Chronicle*. It is worth noting that the passage on the Conqueror in the *Chronicle* echoes the style of a homily: see Cecily Clark, ed., *The Peterborough Chronicle*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), pp. lxxv-lxxix; Seth Lerer, ‘Old English and its Afterlife’, in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 7-34.

For al þat me was leof, hit was þe loð;  
 þu ware a sele gief ich was wroð;  
 to gode þu ware slau and let,  
 and to euele spac and hwat.  
 Al þat good het, þe þuht[e] andsete,  
 þat forbod[e] þe þuhte swete.  
 Iuele wurmes mote þe chewe;  
 swo we þe be þat tu me [ne] rewe;  
 for þine gulte ishal nu to pine,  
 rotie mote þu to time!

Ðus wareð þe sowle þe licame, for þat hit haueð þar after ierned. Among  
 þat þe sowle witeð, þe licame worpeð hewe; þe frendmen him biwepeð gef  
 þar anie ben; bigemeð þe licame, and forgemeð þe sowle; þanne fon uncuðe  
 me[n] to þe aihte þe arure his waren, alse þe boc seið: *Relinquent alienis  
 diuicias suas*, hie bilieueð uncuðe me[n] þe aihte þe hie forleten habbeð.  
 Þe man is uncuð þe oðer, þe nele naht him cnowen, ne helpen him gief he  
 neod haueð. Ðus doð þe libbende frend togenes þe liggende. Gief þe quike  
 haueð aihte þe were þe dedes ærrure, þe he him biqueð, þo he him seluen  
 habben ne mihte, þe quike hem doð him selue to note, and nohte deades  
 sowle to note.

(When the soul strives to go out of its body, it shuts down its five gates and  
 bars them firmly, and deprives them of the functions they employed before:  
 the eyes of their sight, and the ears of their hearing; the nose of its smell,  
 the mouth of its taste; the teeth of their grinding; and the tongue of its  
 speech; and it takes away from all the limbs the might to protect themselves  
 [ll. 1-7]. If the body was righteous in this life, sorrowful is the soul when it  
 has to leave it, and sadly begins to speak, and thus addresses it: '*Heu dilecta  
 michi caro, quod te ponere cogor!* Alas, you were dear to me! Now I must  
 leave you; you were obedient to me in everything I wished. We were  
 unanimous in doing God's will. How shall I live, filled with longing,

without you?’ [ll. 8-14] And if the body was evil, it is loathsome to the soul; it seems that it dwelled in it for too long, and it strongly thinks about escaping out of it: it seems a hindrance, because it loathes being enclosed in it. Then it begins sadly and says these words to the body: ‘*Heu michi cur olidum fueram tibi uincta cadauer!* Alas, you foul corpse, that I ever was tied to you! I dwelled in you for long, and woe is me the while! For all that was dear to me, was loathsome for you: you were joyful if I was angry; you were slow and late to do good and quick and eager towards evil. All that God commanded seemed odious to you, and what is forbidden seemed sweet to you. May evil worms chew you; so cursed be you, as you had no pity for me. I shall now go towards pain for your guilt: May you rot forever!’ [ll. 15-32] Thus, the soul curses the body because of everything it has deserved in the afterlife. While the soul goes away, the body changes colour; his friends, if there are any, mourn it; they take care of the body, and disregard the soul; then strangers take the possessions that were his before, as the book says: *Relinquent alienis diuicias suas*, they shall leave to strangers the possessions they have left behind. A man is a stranger to another when he does not acknowledge him or help him if he is in need. This is what the living friend does to the man lying dead. If the survivor owns possessions that once belonged to the dead, which he bequeathed to him when he could not keep them for himself, the survivor acts for his own benefit, and not for that of the dead man’s soul [ll. 33-41]).<sup>21</sup>

Scholars have investigated the possible sources of the ‘Soul and Body’ passage of Trinity XXIX. Brent argues that ‘the interpolated Latin lines reveal that this

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<sup>21</sup> Cataldi, ‘Trinity Homily xxix’, pp. 648-49. I am most thankful to Professor Bella Millett for her help in editing and translating this passage (pers. comm., 2017). Professor Millett also suggested to me that, in the second hexameter, *iuncta* (‘joined’) could be Morris’ mistranscription of *uincta* (‘bound, shackled’), which fits better the vernacular translation *iteied* (‘tied’).



poem is based on a Latin model no longer extant'.<sup>22</sup> In her above-mentioned study, Wymer suggests that the poetic fragment, 'as it does not stylistically match the rest of the homily, could conceivably represent the homilist recalling lines of a poem from memory'.<sup>23</sup> The definition of "poetic fragment" given by Wymer has been questioned by Pelle:

Such a term implies that the Latin and English verses were selected from larger, earlier works. If this were the case, we would have to posit the existence and loss of both a Latin 'body and soul' poem in hexameters and at least one English poem on the same subject.<sup>24</sup>

Pelle also writes that, while the existence of lost material 'is certainly possible, there is no reason to assume that the homilist was not composing the poetry himself', because 'many homilists also ornamented their texts with alliterations and rhymes of their own invention',<sup>25</sup> as many Old English homilists did as well. In the case of *De Sancto Andrea*, the idea that the English verses are original to the homily cannot be dismissed; nonetheless, I think it is unlikely that the same is true of the Latin verses. *De Sancto Andrea* includes thirty Latin lines. Although not impossible, it seems to me improbable that the two 'Soul and Body' Latin verses are original creations, not least because so much else in the Latin can be traced back to earlier sources and analogues.<sup>26</sup> The derivative nature of the Latin passages makes it hard to imagine the writer suddenly interpolating two original Latin hexameters on the same theme: that would not fit the *usus scribendi* of the homilist. It seems more likely that the two Latin hexameters that introduce the

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<sup>22</sup> Brent, p. 96.

<sup>23</sup> Wymer, p. 400.

<sup>24</sup> Pelle, p. 491.

<sup>25</sup> Pelle, pp. 491-92.

<sup>26</sup> For a full list of the Latin material embedded in the homily and its sources, see Cataldi, pp. 660-64.

souls' addresses to the body are quotations from a lost Latin poem, or from a lost Latin homily that the Trinity homilist has reworked into verses. This hypothesis can be supported by a closer study of the motifs featured in the 'Soul and Body' passage of Trinity XXIX. As I argue below, these motifs look like skeletons of passages more extensively fleshed out in other 'Soul and Body' texts of the Old and Early Middle English period. Some of these motifs (the antithetical pattern of the soul's speech, the presence of a blessed soul, and the metamorphosis involving the body) set the homily in continuity with the Old English 'Soul and Body' tradition, whereas elements like the 'Signs of Death', the deathbed setting, and the imagery of kinsmen and strangers are likely to reflect the contemporary "accumulation of death themes" noted by Woolf.<sup>27</sup>

Different traditions belonging to the 'Soul and Body' literature merge into this passage of the Trinity Homily XXIX, resulting in a unique combination of earlier and later elements. Firstly, *De Sancto Andrea* is one of the few 'Soul and Body' texts preserving an address from both a damned and a blessed soul, and the only one in Early Middle English. Furthermore, the Blessed Soul speaks before the Damned Soul: a feature also shared by the fourth Vercelli homily and by the *Augustini Sermo*. It is also worth noting that both the addresses occur immediately after the moment of death; while the deathbed setting is found in Old English homiletic material such as the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*, the address *after* the moment of death becomes the favourite setting of the Early Middle English 'Soul and Body' texts, where it is usually preceded by the imagery of the preparation of the burial and/or the depiction of the impending death. This setting, as we shall see, frames poetical works such as *Shroud and Grave*, *Latemest Day* and the *Worcester Fragments*, all roughly contemporary with *De Sancto Andrea*.

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<sup>27</sup> Woolf, p. 93.

In my view, Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea* features a departure from the Old English tradition of the ‘time of the visit’. As noted by Willard, in the Old English works where there is a periodic return of the soul to the body (the texts grouped in ‘type 2’ in the previous chapter), both a damned and a blessed soul speak;<sup>28</sup> the same happens in the homilies framed by a Judgment Day setting (the texts of ‘type 3’). Unlike the Old English homilies, *De Sancto Andrea* displays *both* a righteous and a damned soul within a deathbed setting. In the present state of our knowledge, one can only speculate whether this change is an innovation by the Trinity homilist or an element already found in his supposed Latin source; the key issue is that, in *De Sancto Andrea*, there is a ‘shift’ towards the deathbed setting that will become constant throughout the Early Middle English phase.

In other respects, *De Sancto Andrea* seems to faithfully continue the Old English ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition. The homily features the contrastive rhetorical structure which is typical of the Old English ‘Soul’s Addresses’ of ‘type 1’ and of the Latin *Nonantola Version*: an opposition is drawn between the deeds of the body and the condition of the soul during the body’s lifetime. However, the antithetical pattern of *De Sancto Andrea* is less developed than the more structured passages of *Vercelli IV*<sup>29</sup>, and closer to the one in the Vercelli-Exeter poem.<sup>30</sup> By comparison with its Old English and Latin equivalents, the

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<sup>28</sup> Cf. Rudolph Willard, ‘The Address of the Soul to the Body’, *PMLA*, 50.4 (1935), 957-83, at p. 976.

<sup>29</sup> See Brent, pp. 96-98.

<sup>30</sup> A similar concept is found in the second Lambeth homily, *Hic dicendum est de quadragesima*: ‘al þet þe licome luueð þet þa saule heteð and wa is hire þer fore’, ‘the soul hates all that the body loves, and woe is her therefore’. Edition in Richard Morris, ed., *Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises*, EETS, OS 29 and 34 (London: Trübner, 1867; repr. as 1 vol., 1998), p. 19. As discussed by Sisam and Wilcox, a section of *Lambeth II* adapts Wulfstan’s *Godcundre Warnunge*:

contrastive speech of *De Sancto Andrea* is limited to simpler oppositions such as good/evil, joy/pain. Brent notes that ‘unlike other antithetical passages in the address tradition, this one abbreviates the pairs of joys and pains, in order to focus on the moral character of the body’, and that ‘it is far more pragmatic, far less philosophical’ than a text such as the *Nonantola Version*.<sup>31</sup> The damned soul’s antithetical speech in *De Sancto Andrea* could arguably represent a condensed version of a more structured passage found in the lost Latin source, which the Trinity homilist summed up and reworked in vernacular verses. A similar process of ‘condensation’ of motifs featured in the Old English tradition involves the changing of the body’s colour after the end of the address, a motif already visible in three Old English homilies discussed in Chapter 1 (*Vercelli IV*, the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*) as well as in the Latin Macarius tale and in the pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo LXIX* of *Sermones ad fratres in eremo*.<sup>32</sup> In *Vercelli IV*, the metamorphosis affects both the Damned Body and the Damned Soul;<sup>33</sup> as stated

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see Celia Sisam, ‘The Scribal Tradition of the Lambeth Homilies’, *Review of English Studies*, 2.6 (1951), 105-113, at pp. 109-10; Jonathan Wilcox, ‘Wulfstan and the Twelfth Century’, in *Rewriting Old English in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Mary Swan and Elaine Treharne, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 30 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), pp. 83-97, at pp. 87-97. However, the quoted passage comes from a different section of *Lambeth II*, the source of which, to my knowledge, has not yet been traced.

<sup>31</sup> Brent, p. 98.

<sup>32</sup> It is worth recalling that, according to Dudley, the *Macarius Homily*, *Napier XXIX*, the *Nonantola Version* and the Latin Pseudo-Augustinian *Sermo LXIX* of *Sermones ad fratres in eremo* are closely related. See Louise Dudley, ‘An Early Homily on the Body and Soul Theme’, *JEGP*, 8 (1909), 225-53.

<sup>33</sup> For the sake of convenience, I quote again the relevant lines, from Donald G Scragg, ed., *The Vercelli Homilies and Related Texts*, EETS, OS 300 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), pp. 101-102, ll. 290-293: ‘hwilum he bið swiðe laðlicum men gelic, þonne wannað he 7 doxaþ; oðre hwile he bið blæc 7 ærhiwe; hwilum he bið collsweart. 7 gelice sio sawl hiwað on yfel bleoh swa

in the previous chapter, Hall and Zacher have proposed a parallel between this passage of *Vercelli IV* and the third of Cassian's *Conferences*, where it is stated that the soul is cloaked and given bright colour by virtue, or dark by sin.<sup>34</sup> In *De Sancto Andrea*, the motif of the 'changing of colour' is stripped-down to the bare mention that the body "changes colour" ('þe licame worpeð hewe'). It is not specified whether this process affects both the righteous and the wicked (as in the *Nonantola Version* and *Vercelli IV*) or only the cursed body; moreover, the soul does not undergo any visible metamorphosis. This suggests, again, that Trinity XXIX may be an abridged version of this motif.

While the topos of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' continues the Old English tradition, the Early Middle English "accumulation of death themes" is reflected in two elements that respectively open and close the passage: the 'Signs of Death' and the indifference of friends. Scholars consider the motif of the 'Signs of Death' as probably influenced by the signs of impending death described in medical treatises as Hippocrates' *Liber Prognosticorum* and the *Flos Medicinae Scholae Salernis*.<sup>35</sup> An early example of poetical representation of the 'Signs of Death' is found in the *Worcester Fragments*, as we shall see in Chapter 2.3. As stated above, a number of Middle English poems on the 'Signs of Death' have been

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same swa se lichoma, 7 bið gyt wyrsan hiwes', "for a moment it looks like a loathsome man, then it turns to dark and becomes black; for a moment it is pale, and dark; then black as coal. And similarly the soul turns to evil colours, as the body does, and to an even worse form".

<sup>34</sup> Thomas N. Hall, 'The Psychedelic Transmogrification of the Soul in Vercelli Homily IV', in *Time and Eternity: The Medieval Discourse*, ed. by Gerhard Jaritz and Gerson Moreno-Riaño, International Medieval Research, 9 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2003), 309-22, at p. 318; Samantha Zacher, *Preaching the Converted: The Style and Rhetoric of the Vercelli Book Homilies* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2009), p. 197.

<sup>35</sup> See Rossell Hope Robbins, 'Signs of Death in Middle English', *Mediaeval Studies*, 32 (1970), 282-98; see also Woolf, pp. 78-82.

preserved; ‘actually they serve two separate functions: the age-old diagnostic use to ascertain whether a sick man live or die, and the later religious use to warn the dying sinner to repent’.<sup>36</sup> The “religious use” is explicit in *De Sancto Andrea*, where the loss of the five senses is caused by the soul’s will (ll. 1-2: ‘ðan þe sowle fundeð to faren ut of hire licame, hie tuneð to hire fif gaten and penneð wel faste’), and not by a natural process as in the *Worcester Fragments* and in the Middle English lyrics. In this instance, *De Sancto Andrea* is reminiscent of Ælfric’s homily on Christmas (*LS* I.): ‘seo sawul is þæs lichoman hlæfdige, and heo gewissað þa fif andgitu þæs lichaman swa swa of cyne-sætle’,<sup>37</sup> “the soul is the mistress of the body, and it guides the five senses of the body as from a throne”, and finds an almost exact equivalent in Trinity homily XVIII *Dominica IV post Pascha*: ‘þat godes giue is betere. þe alimeð þe man of fiffolde mihte. his egen to sen his earen to listen his nose to runien. his muð to smellen. and his lichame al mid to friðende’,<sup>38</sup> “that gift of God is better, as it enlightens the man with a fivefold power: his eyes to see, his ears to listen, his nose to speak, his mouth to smell [sic] and to protect all his body”. The ‘Signs of Death’ of *De Sancto Andrea* are probably an expansion of a list of the five senses (with the addition of the loss of speech and of the grinding of teeth, l.6: ‘toðen here grind, and tunge here speche’), framed by a deathbed context. Thus, Trinity XXIX offers evidence for

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<sup>36</sup> Robbins, p. 282.

<sup>37</sup> Walter W. Skeat, ed., *Ælfric’s Lives of Saints*, EETS, OS 76 (London: Trübner, 1881), p. 22.

<sup>38</sup> Morris, p. 107, ll. 17-20. The two passages in Trinity XVIII and Trinity XXIX are actually so close that one can hardly consider them as unrelated. I would argue that the passage on the five senses in Trinity XVIII relies on that in Trinity XXIX. The passage in Trinity XXIX, more extended than the one in Trinity XVIII, is in alliterative prose, whereas only the first two lines of the corresponding section of Trinity XVIII alliterate: ‘þe alimeð þe man of fiffolde mihte. his egen to sen his earen to listen’ (emphasis mine). The misreading ‘his nose to runien. his muð to smellen’ in Trinity XVIII could have been influenced by Trinity XXIX, ‘muð here smel’.

Woolf's statement that 'a description of the Signs was [...] a commonplace of medieval preaching on death'.<sup>39</sup>

The activities that follow the 'changing of colour' show a similar attention toward death-related themes. The living friends mourn the body and neglect the soul, while "strangers" seize the wealth that once belonged to the body:

Þe frendmen him biwepeð gef þar anie ben; bigemeð þe licame, and  
forgemeð þe sowle; þanne fon uncuðe me[n] to þe aihte þe arure his waren,  
alse þe boc seið: *Relinquent alienis diuicias suas*, hie bilieueð uncuðe  
me[n] þe aihte þe hie forleten habbeð.

(His friends, if there are any, mourn it; they take care of the body, and  
disregard the soul; then strangers take the possessions that were his before,  
as the book says: *Relinquent alienis diuicias suas*, they shall leave to  
strangers the possessions they have left behind).<sup>40</sup>

In the subsequent commentary, the homilist explains that a "friend" who neglects the soul's needs becomes himself a "stranger":

Þe man is uncuð þe oðer, þe nele naht him cnowen, ne helpen him gief he  
neod haueð. Þus doð þe libbende frend togenes þe liggende. Gief þe quike  
haueð aihte þe were þe dedes ærrure, þe he him biqueð, þo he him seluen  
habben ne mihte, þe quike hem doð him selue to note, and nohte deades  
sowle to note.

(A man is a stranger to another when he does not acknowledge him or help  
him if he is in need. This is what the living friend does to the man lying  
dead. If the survivor owns possessions that once belonged to the dead,  
which he bequeathed to him when he could not keep them for himself, the  
survivor uses them for his own benefit, and not for that of the dead man's  
soul).<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Woolf, p. 80.

<sup>40</sup> Cataldi, pp. 648-49.

<sup>41</sup> Cataldi, pp. 648-49.

As noted later in this chapter, the theme of the indifference of friends towards the soul and the arrival of strangers that ravage the body's wealth and possessions is also found in *Latemest Day* and in the *Worcester Fragments*, and is further developed in Middle English debate poetry. With its focus on the world of the living,<sup>42</sup> the commentary on *relinquent alienis diuicias suas* in *De Sancto Andrea* offers a notable homiletic background to the 'Soul and Body' poetry that was to follow. This commentary simultaneously condemns the futility of worldly goods and the greediness of men. Brent has already argued that 'the reluctance of kinsmen to employ the deceased's material belongings for the good of his soul' in Trinity XXIX is 'unusual in prior addresses' and that 'similar sentiments become very important in subsequent poetic addresses, as well as the debates'.<sup>43</sup> These 'sentiments', along with the depiction of the impending death that opens the 'Soul and Body' passage, suggest that the homilist was influenced by the death-related imagery that was to inform the thirteenth-century 'Soul and Body' poetry. This death-related imagery consists of representations of the 'Signs of Death', of the preparation of the burial, of the activities of the living: an expanded funeral context in which the key topos of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' is set. The presence of these 'contemporary' elements also supports the most recent scholarly opinion about the *Trinity Homilies*: they were not products of a mere antiquarian revival of the golden age of Old English homiletics, but texts that, while showing a continuity with the earlier homiletic tradition, were open to new influences and had a contemporary audience in mind.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Brent, p. 98.

<sup>43</sup> Brent, pp. 186-87.

<sup>44</sup> On the theme of 'continuity' and 'innovation' in the post-Conquest homiletic and in the Trinity Homilies, see Elaine Treharne, 'Categorization, Periodization: The Silence of (the) English in the Twelfth Century', *New Medieval Literatures*, 8 (2006), 247-73; Ead., 'English in the Post-Conquest Period', in *A Companion to Anglo-Saxon Literature*, ed. by Phillip Pulsiano and Elaine Treharne



Given the presence of various motifs, some of which (such as the changing of colour) are only briefly sketched, it is possible that the ‘Soul and Body’ passage of *De Sancto Andrea* is a condensed version of another text, of which only the two Latin hexameters survive. In other words, the homilist could have embedded the two Latin verses and then summed up, in the vernacular, the content of this Latin text. It is, then, worth reconsidering Batiouchkof’s opinion on *De Sancto Andrea*:

L’intercalation de vers latins dans ces discours ne nous permet guère de douter de l’existence d’un original latin qui lui aurait servi de base [...] mais l’auteur de l’homélie reproduit [...] fidèlement les données de l’ancienne légende, sans les confondre avec d’autres traditions dérivées du même sujet.<sup>45</sup>

(The intercalation of Latin verses in these speeches does not allow us to doubt of the existence of a Latin original that served as a base [...] but the author of the homily reproduced [...] accurately the elements of the ancient legend, without confusing it with other traditions derived from the same theme).

It is my belief too that the Trinity homilist did not “confuse” the elements of the ancient legend with other traditions; rather, he placed these elements in a contemporary framework. I would argue that the Trinity homilist enriched his text with elements reflecting the ‘accumulation of death themes’ that marked the

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(Oxford: Blackwell, 2008) pp. 403-14; Bella Millett, ‘The Pastoral Context of the Trinity and Lambeth Homilies’, in *Essays in Manuscript Geography. Vernacular Manuscripts of the English West Midlands from the Conquest to the Sixteenth Century*, ed. by Wendy Scase, *Medieval Texts and Cultures of Northern Europe*, 10 (Turnhout: Brepols, 2007), pp. 43-64; Ead., ‘Change and Continuity: The English Sermon before 1250’, in *The Oxford Handbook of Medieval Literature in English*, ed. by Elaine Treharne and Greg Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 221-39.

<sup>45</sup> Batiouchkof, p. 46.

development of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme: the motif of ‘Signs of Death’ (which introduces the ‘Soul and Body’ passage of Trinity XXIX) and the image of the strangers who ravage the body’s wealth (which closes the passage and opens a new section of the sermon). The deathbed setting that frames the ‘Soul and Body’ passage is also more likely to reflect contemporary tastes than to be a throwback to earlier traditions: thirteenth-century ‘Soul and Body’ lyrics discussed in this chapter such as *Shroud and Grave*, the *Worcester Fragments* and *Latemest Day* all begin with the preparation of the burial and/or the ‘Signs of Death’, motifs that introduce the Soul’s address (as the ‘Signs of Death’ in the Trinity Homily XXIX). *De Sancto Andrea* represents, then, a key passage in the literary history of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme: on the one hand, it provides ‘important evidence of the survival of the address tradition’;<sup>46</sup> on the other hand, it shows its ongoing evolution and development, which were to be fully realised in the thirteenth century.

### 2.3. INNOVATIONS IN THE *WORCESTER FRAGMENTS*

The full literary ‘potential’ of the Early Middle English motifs outlined above is realised in the fragments of a poem preserved in Worcester Cathedral MS F. 174 (henceforth *Worcester Fragments*), a work that has exerted a significant influence on subsequent ‘Soul and Body’ poetry. Worcester Cathedral MS F. 174 is the only surviving manuscript whose primary scribe is the renowned ‘Tremulous Hand’ of Worcester.<sup>47</sup> The codex has been dismembered and its leaves have been trimmed and used for binding other manuscripts.<sup>48</sup> Sir Thomas Phillipps first rescued and washed the leaves – inflicting further damage on them – and collated

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<sup>46</sup> Brent, p. 187.

<sup>47</sup> See Moffat, pp. 2-3.

<sup>48</sup> On the manuscript’s history, see Moffat, pp. 3-6.

and published the texts preserved in Worcester Cathedral MS F. 174. The codex also includes a copy of Ælfric's *Grammar and Glossary*<sup>49</sup> and a short alliterative poem, known as *The First Worcester Fragment*, which laments the loss of the great tradition of Anglo-Saxon teaching and learning.<sup>50</sup>

In spite of the troubled history of the manuscript, probably not much has been lost of the poem on the 'Soul's Address to the Body', but the exact order of the fragments still remains a vexed issue. Richard Buchholz published an edition of the *Worcester Fragments* and of the short poem *The Grave* in 1890;<sup>51</sup> his book remained the standard edition of these texts for almost a century. Buchholz's edition is particularly notable for the study of the prosody of the poem,<sup>52</sup> which has been further improved by Moffat in his recent critical edition. Moffat notes that the *Worcester Fragments* are a 'prosodical hybrid': they feature a combination of various alliterative long lines and rhyming verses, which, he argues, must have appealed to the taste of a thirteenth-century audience.<sup>53</sup> As seen above (2.2), this structure is also shared by *De Sancto Andrea* but, unlike Trinity Homily XXIX, in the *Worcester Fragments* the lines are mostly alliterative, with relatively few rhyming couplets and some verses that do not display any evident sign of rhyme or alliteration. Two points of Moffat's analysis are of particular interest. Firstly, he notes that this 'prosodical mix' is closer to fourteenth-century

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<sup>49</sup> Sir Thomas Phillipps, ed., *Fragment of Ælfric's Grammar, Ælfric's Glossary, and a Poem on the Soul and Body Discovered among the Archives of Worcester Cathedral* (London: W. Clowes & Sons, 1838).

<sup>50</sup> On this poem, see Stephen K. Brehe, 'Reassembling the *First Worcester Fragment*', *Speculum*, 65.3 (1990), 521-36.

<sup>51</sup> Richard Buchholz, ed., *Die Fragmente der Reden der Seele an den Leichnam*, Erlanger Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie, 6 (Erlangen and Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1890).

<sup>52</sup> See Buchholz, pp. lxxvii-lxxiv.

<sup>53</sup> See Moffat, p. 26.

alliterative poems than to the Old English poetical tradition, the closest antecedents being Ælfric and Wulfstan's rhythmical prose.<sup>54</sup> Furthermore, he observes that some of the rhyming lines (those usually repeated in the poem) serve a specific purpose: they mark a change of argument. In Moffat's words, 'the repeated elements change with the usually abrupt shifts in focus, and brief summarizing statements, often rhyming or assonant lines, usually signal the end of one subsection or the beginning of the next'.<sup>55</sup> With the significant exceptions of Moffat's critical edition and of Ricciardi's collective edition of four 'Soul and Body' poems,<sup>56</sup> the *Worcester Fragments* have been overlooked by recent scholarship, a fate shared by many (if not all) of the lyrics discussed in this chapter.<sup>57</sup>

The extant text of the poem consists of seven fragments, labelled A to G by Moffat following the order of the leaves established by Phillipps.<sup>58</sup> Several lines are missing both at the beginning and at the end of each fragment. The address of the soul to the body extends from Fragment B to the end of the poem as it now stands. The address features many notable innovations right from the start. Firstly, there is the deathbed setting: superficially this seems to be an element of

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<sup>54</sup> Moffat, p. 26.

<sup>55</sup> Moffat, p. 34.

<sup>56</sup> Gail D.D. Ricciardi, 'The Grave-Bound Body and Soul: A Collective Edition of Four Related Poems from the Vercelli and Exeter Books, Bodley and Worcester Manuscripts' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1976), pp. 192-281.

<sup>57</sup> One of the very few works fully devoted to the poem is the above-mentioned study by Heningham, pp. 291-307. Other notable studies are in J.D. Bruce, 'A Contribution to the Study of "The Body and the Soul": Poems in English', *Modern Language Notes*, 5.7 (1890), pp. 193-201; Louise Dudley, 'The Grave', *Modern Philology*, 11.3 (1914), pp. 429-42; see also Van Os, pp. 194-98.

<sup>58</sup> See Moffat, pp. 49-50.

continuity with the primitive form of the legend,<sup>59</sup> but it is actually structured according to a new scheme. As noted in the case of *De Sancto Andrea*, in the Early Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ texts the deathbed setting is usually accompanied by other motifs like the ‘Signs of Death’, the preparation of the burial, and the indifference of family and friends, all of which are featured in the *Worcester Fragments*. Most importantly, the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ occurs *after* the moment of death (in homilies like the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*, the soul’s complaint starts during the body’s last breath). Henningham argues that this shift is just an alteration made by the poet to avoid absurdity,<sup>60</sup> but I think that this can be considered a distinctive twelfth-thirteenth century feature, common to all the ‘Soul and Body’ texts of this period (for example, *Shroud and Grave* and *Latemest Day*).

The short *ubi sunt* passage<sup>61</sup> that opens the soul’s address is actually the first poetical rendition of this motif in the ‘Soul and Body’ literature (the Old English

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<sup>59</sup> Cf. Louise Dudley, *The Egyptian Elements in the Legend of the Body and Soul*, Bryn Mawr Monographs, 8 (Baltimore, MD: J.H. Furst, 1911), pp. 18-31.

<sup>60</sup> Henningham, p. 298.

<sup>61</sup> It is doubtful whether this passage should be considered an example of the *ubi sunt* or of the *quid profuit* topos. According to Woolf, p. 96, ‘though the questions may often appear stylistically identical in form, they have a dual ancestry [...]. In the genuine *ubi sunt* form the verbs are governed by kinds of people or by proper names, usually of an evocative kind, whilst in the *quid profuit* form they are governed by nouns indicating various kind of possessions, or by abstract nouns such as ‘pride’ or “vain-glory”’. As Moffat does, I choose the definition of *ubi sunt*, which, in my opinion, is closer to the structure of the questions. The two traditions, that of the *ubi sunt* and that of the *quid profuit*, probably merged into each other at some point, without a clear-cut distinction between the various kinds of nouns; the structure of the questions remained the only relevant difference. See, for example, *Visio Philiberti*, v. 22: ‘quid valent palatia, pulcræ vel quid ædes?’ (an example of *quid profuit*) and v. 42: ‘ubi nunc sunt prædia quæ tu congregasti?’ (an example of *ubi sunt*). On the *Visio Philiberti*, see Chapter 3.3.

*Soul and Body* lacking a distinctive *ubi sunt* section), vv. B 4-13:

Hwar is nu þe<o mo>dinesse (swo muchel þe þu lufedæst)?  
Hwar beoþ nu þeo pundes þurh <pa>newes igædered?  
(Heo weren monifolde bi markes itolde.)  
Hwar beoþ <nu> þeo goldfæten †þeo þe guldene comen to þine honden?†<sup>62</sup>  
(þin blisse is <nu> al agon, min seoruwe is fornon.)  
Hwar beoþ nu þine wæde þe þ<u> wel lufedest?  
Hwar beoþ þe [sibbe þe] seten sori ofer þe,  
beden swuþe ȝeorne <þet> þe come bote?  
heom þuþte al to longe þ(et) þu were on liue,  
for heo <we>ren grædie to gripen þine æiht. <sup>63</sup>  
(Where is now your pride – so much you loved yourself? Where are now  
those pounds you accumulated by pennies? They were numerous pennies  
to count. Where are now the †golden† vessels† that came to your hands? †  
Your bliss has all gone, my sorrow is yet to come. Where are your garments  
that you loved so much? Where are your kinsmen that sat grief-stricken  
beside you, earnestly praying for your recovery? It seemed to them that you  
lived for too long, as they were greedy to take hold of your property).

The last lines introduce the description of the greedy kinsmen eager to take possession of the body's wealth (vv. B 12-13), an image that will be constantly featured in the 'Soul and Body' poems of the Middle English phase. As seen above, the homilist of *De Sancto Andrea* notes that friends who disregard the spiritual needs of the departed act like "strangers" ('uncuðe men'); but the poet of the *Worcester Fragments* paints an even more realistic and sorry picture.

This tendency towards a more detailed approach, with images taken from daily life, is particularly striking in the detailed depiction of the sinner. In the Old

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<sup>62</sup> On the lacuna, see Moffat, pp. 87-88, and Joseph Hall, ed., *Selections from early Middle English 1130-1250*, 2 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1920), II, p. 238.

<sup>63</sup> Moffat, p. 65.

English *Soul and Body*, the soul accused the body of gluttony, boasting, and “sinful desires” (‘fīren lustas’); in the *Worcester Fragments*, the catalogue is much more extended, and the sinner is minutely characterised through a list of different misdeeds. In the *ubi sunt* passage, the body is accused of excessive love for rich clothes, golden vessels, stockpiled coins, and for its pride for itself (‘modinesse’), an element that usually opens the Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ debates.<sup>64</sup> The sinner of the *Worcester Fragments* is a wealthy person who enjoyed many earthly goods in his life; he was a member of the nobility, possibly a knight (vv. C 3-8):

Ne þearft þu on stirope stonden mid fotan,  
on nenne goldfohne bowe, for þu <scal>t faren al to howe  
and þu scalt nu ruglunge ridæn to þære eorþe,  
ut<se>t æt þære dure (ne þearft þu næffre onʒean cumæn),  
reowliche riden <son>e beræfed  
a<t> þene eorþliche weole þe þu iwold ohtest.<sup>65</sup>

(You don’t need to stand with the feet in the stirrup, in any gold-shining saddlebow, because you shall come to grief, and you must now go flat on your back<sup>66</sup> on earth, placed outside the door, and you won’t have any

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<sup>64</sup> See Chapter 3.5. In the *Apocalypse of Paul*, 24:1-2, pride is called “the root of all evils” (‘Radix omnium malorum est superbia’); Theodore Silverstein and Anthony Hilhorst, eds, *Apocalypse of Paul. A New Critical Edition of Three Long Latin Versions*, Cahiers d’orientalisme, 21 (Geneva: P. Cramer, 1997), p. 124, ll. 1-2.

<sup>65</sup> Moffat, p. 67.

<sup>66</sup> As suggested to me by Dr Myra Stokes (University of Bristol) and Professor Bella Millett (pers. comm., 2018), *ruglunge* is unlikely to refer to riding ‘backwards’; it rather indicates a supine position. Cf. ‘rūglinge (adv.)’, in H. Kurath et al., *Middle English Dictionary*, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor (MI) 1952-2002, online version (2013), <<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?size=First+100&type=headword&q1=ruglinge&rgxp=constrained>>, last accessed October 2018.

occasion to come back, wretchedly ride, soon deprived of your earthly weal, which you had in your power).

This is probably the earliest attestation of the image of a knight in the ‘Soul and Body’ literature. The picture of this sinner is less “universal” than those found in the Old English tradition: the reader/listener of the *Worcester Fragments* is not likely to have empathised with the figure of a proud and rich knight, unless he belonged to the same class. Furthermore, the poet adds other notable elements. In vv. B 20-27, the Soul states that the Body refused some of the basic duties of every good Christian: to attend the Mass, give alms and take the Holy Communion:

Noldest þu ma>kien † lufe wiþ ilærede men,<sup>67</sup>  
ȝiuen ham of þine gode þ(et) heo þe fo<re> beden.  
Heo mihten mid salmsonge þine sunne acwenchen,  
mid <ho>re messe þine misdeden fore biddæn;  
heo mihten offrian loc leofli<che> for þe,<sup>68</sup>  
swuþe deorwurþe lac, licame cristes;  
þurh þære þu were alese<d> from hellewite,  
and mid his reade blode þ(et) he ȝeat on rode.<sup>69</sup>

(You did not want to praise the learned men, give them what they asked of your goods. They could overcome your sins with psalms, pray for your misdeeds by means of their Mass; they could kindly offer a gift for you, the extremely precious gift, the body of Christ; you could have been redeemed

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<sup>67</sup> Hall, II, p. 239, emends the mutilated verb to *lokien* ‘preserve, maintain’, which would change the meaning of the first line to ‘you did not want to preserve the goodwill of the learned men’ (the clergy)

<sup>68</sup> *Loc* can also mean ‘religious offer, sacrifice’; see ‘lōk (n.(3))’, *MED Online*, <<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED25940>>, last accessed October 2018.

<sup>69</sup> Moffat, pp. 65-66. Moffat, pp. 34-36, considers this section to be ‘perhaps the finest passage in *SA* from the point of view of style’.



from the pains of Hell through it, by means of the red blood that He poured on the rood).

The theme of the relationship between man and Church, and the emphasis on the sin of omission is recalled in vv. F 4-15, where the soul describes the need for confession, refused by the Body; it is also paralleled by passages in *Latemest Day* (a poem influenced by the *Worcester Fragments*, as I shall discuss later on), in *Shroud and Grave*, and in later debates such as *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*. Thus, it can be considered one of the distinctive aspects of the Early Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ texts.

Not only the rich, proud knight of the *Worcester Fragments* is accused of dismissing the ‘learned men’ of the Church who could have saved his soul, but he is also charged with speaking insulting words and refusing to give shelter to the wretched ones (vv. C 16-28):

Ʒeo men beoþ þe bliþre, þe arisen ær wiþ þe,  
þ(et) þin muþ is betuned; <þu> þeo teone ut lettest  
þe heom sore grulde, þet ham gros þe aȝan;  
<dea>þ hine haueþ bituned and þene teone aleid.  
Soþ is iseid on þen salme <bo>c:  
*os tuu(m) habundauit malitia,*  
was on þine muþe luþernesne ri<f>e.  
<No>dest þu on þine huse herborwen þeo wrecchen,  
ne mihten heo under <þin>e roue none reste finden;  
noldest þu nefre helpen þam orlease wrec<che>n,  
ac þu sete on þine benche underleid mid þine bolstre,  
þu wurpe <cne>ow ofer cneow ne icneowe þu þe sulfen  
þ(et) þu scoldest mid wurmen <wu>nien in eorþan.<sup>70</sup>

(Those who rose in hostility against you are glad that your mouth is shut;

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<sup>70</sup> Moffat, p. 68.

you let out the insult that sorely offended them, that made them frightened of you; death has shut it and stopped the insult. The truth is said in the Book of Psalms: *os tuum habundauit malitia*, there was an abundance of false words in your mouth. You did not want to shelter the wretched ones in your house, nor they could find any rest under your roof; you never wanted to help the poor wretched, but you sat on your bench supported by your cushion, you crossed one knee over the other and you weren't aware that you would have to dwell with worms in the earth).

Sheltering the homeless is one of the Seven Corporal Works of Mercy; its importance descends from the episode of the Final Judgment in Matthew, 25.31-46. It is worth noting that this Work of Mercy is not mentioned in any of the previous 'Soul and Body' texts (even in those particularly influenced by the Gospel's episode, like *Vercelli IV* or the *Augustini Sermo*); the *Worcester Fragments* are the first 'Soul and Body' work where it is featured. In the poem, the wretched ones are not only refused, but also offended by the Damned Body; the poet was particularly concerned with the theme of mildness of speech, which is also developed in vv. G 15-26:

Nu liþ þin <þung>e stille on ful colde denne;  
 nafest þu gærsume þe mo þe heo was spekinde <so,  
 for> heo was faken bi foren and atterne bi hinden;  
 heo demde feole domes þe drihten <weren> loþe;  
 isæid hit is on psalme and ful soþ hit is bi hire:  
*lingua tua concinnabat <dolos>*,  
 heo 3eo<dde>de fakenliche and þen feonde icwemde.  
 Heo heou mid hearde worde and <huned>e þa wrecches;  
 scearp heo was and kene and cwemde þen deofle  
 mid † alle þen sun<ne † so> efre was his wille –  
 a wurþe hire wa þ(et) heo spekinde was so –

heo hauef unc <þus ide>med to deoppere helle.<sup>71</sup>

(Now your tongue lies still in the cold grave; you do not have any more reward for the way that it spoke, for it was false before and poisonous behind; it passed evil judgments that were of offence to the Lord. It is said in the Psalm and it is true for it: *lingua tua concinnabat dolos*, it sang deceitfully and pleased the devil. It hurt with hard words and abused the wretched ones; it was sharp and fierce and pleased the devil with every sin, for that was his will – woe to it for ever that it spoke so – it has thus condemned us to the deep Hell).

This stress on the ‘Sin of the Tongue’<sup>72</sup> is not unprecedented in the ‘Soul and Body’ *corpus* – it is featured in both speeches of *Vercelli IV* –<sup>73</sup> but it is particularly emphasised in the *Worcester Fragments*. The decaying process of the corpse is seen as a sort of punishment that anticipates the eternal pains of Hell: the deceitful tongue of the Body must now stay silent, as a ‘reward’ for the many insults spoken in life. The link between punishment and decomposition is particularly evident in the ‘food-for-worms’ passage, especially in the image of the “entrails that were dear” to the Body (vv. C 38-50):

Þe sculen nu waxen wurmes besiden,  
þeo hungrie feond þeo þe freten wulleþ;  
heo wulleþ þe frecliche freten for heom þin flæsc likeþ;  
heo wulleþ freten þin fule hold þeo hwule heo hit fin<deþ>;  
þonne hit al biþ agon heo wulleþ gnawen þine bon,  
þeo orlease wur<mes>. Heo windeþ on þin ærmes,  
heo brekeþ þine breoste and borieþ þ(urh) ofer al,

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<sup>71</sup> Moffat, pp. 79-80.

<sup>72</sup> On the ‘Sins of the Tongue’, see Edwin David Craun, *Lies, Slander, and Obscenity in Medieval English Literature. Pastoral Rhetoric and the Deviant Speaker*, Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature, 31 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>73</sup> See Chapter 1.4.

<heo c>reopeþ in and ut: þet hord is hore owen.  
 And so heo wulleþ waden wide in þi<ne wom>be,  
 todelen þine þermes þeo þe deore weren,  
 lifre and þine lihte lod<liche> torenden,  
 and so scal formelten mawe and þin milte,  
 and so scal þin i(n) [...] <sup>74</sup>

(Now the worms shall flourish around you, the hungry enemies that want to devour you; they want to devour you eagerly because they like your flesh; they want to devour your foul corpse while they find it, and when it is all gone, the pitiless worms shall chew your skeleton. They twist round your arms, they break into your chest and bore holes through it all, and they creep in and out: that's their own treasure. And so they want to go far and wide in the belly, destroy your entrails, which were dear to you, grievously tear in pieces the liver and the lungs, and your stomach and your spleen shall decay, and so shall your [...])

These verses offer an anatomical description from outside (arms, flesh) and inside (belly, liver etc.), a description less structured than the more detailed picture found in the Old English *Soul and Body* (and less defined than the rhetorical portrait of the Latin *Royal Debate*)<sup>75</sup> but still of some interest. The 'decomposition passages' in the *Worcester Fragments* and in the Vercelli-Exeter poem develop the same motif and connect the organs with specific sins, but otherwise have little in common. The attack of the worms mostly involves different parts of the body; furthermore, the passage in the *Worcester Fragments* is part of the 'Soul's Address', whereas it occurs after the Damned Soul has spoken in *Soul and Body* (and, being narrated by the poet, has a more detached tone). Overall, there is no evidence that the author of the *Worcester Fragments*

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<sup>74</sup> Moffat, p. 69.

<sup>75</sup> See Chapter 3.2.

had access to *Soul and Body*: ‘the similarities [...] result from two English poets treating an identical theme, not from direct influence of the older work upon the later’.<sup>76</sup> The two ‘food-for-worms’ passages share a similar preoccupation for the integrity of the body, a ‘corporeal anxiety’, as defined by Glenn Davis in his study on the Vercelli-Exeter poem.<sup>77</sup>

The *Worcester Fragments* show unusual attention to concrete detail and an innovative style (typical of Early Middle English) elsewhere; for example, in the treatment of the ‘Signs of Death’ and in the motif of the preparation for the burial. Fragment A begins with an introductory sermon by the narrator: a tale on the original union of Body and Soul and their separation at the time of death (vv. A 1-21). The motif of the ‘Signs of Death’ is inserted in this passage, vv. A 17-21:

Him deaueþ þa aren, him dimmeþ <þa> eizen,  
 him scerpeþ þe neose, him scrinckeþ þa lippen,  
 him scorteþ <þe> þunge,  
 him trukeþ his iwit, him teoreþ his miht,  
 him coldeþ his <liche>: liggeþ þe ban stille.<sup>78</sup>  
 (His ears become deaf, his eyes dim, his nose gets sharp, his lips get dry,  
 his tongue becomes short, his mind is lacking, his might fails, his body  
 becomes cold: the corpse lies still).

The narrator then illustrates the sorrow of the relatives and the preparation of the body’s burial (vv. A 22-44). This latter motif is accurately described: the corpse

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<sup>76</sup> Moffat, p. 41.

<sup>77</sup> Glenn Davis, ‘Corporeal Anxiety in *Soul and Body II*’, *Philological Quarterly*, 87.1-2 (2008), 33-50. Davis notes a similarity between the gruesome description in *Soul and Body* and the anatomical catalogue found in the *Lorica of Laidcenn*, an invocation to God where the faithful ask protection for various parts of the body from suffering and from the attack of demons.

<sup>78</sup> Moffat, p. 63.

is put towards the east (v. A 30) and measured with a yardstick<sup>79</sup> (*zerde*, v. A 33, which Moffat translates as ‘staff’<sup>80</sup>), as “prescribed by law” (v. A 35). The orientation of the corpse agrees with the findings of recent archaeological investigations of medieval burial practices: ‘by the Middle Ages the orientation of graves was consistent: the heads point west, the feet east’.<sup>81</sup> This practice relied on multiple factors, such as religious beliefs related to Passion and Judgment Day, seasonal patterns, and the cycle of sunrise and sunset.<sup>82</sup> These details suggest that the poet’s aim was twofold: not only to issue a religious warning, but also to draw audiences in by using images taken from daily life, such as the preparation of a burial, with its practices and instruments of measurement.<sup>83</sup> A similar passage occurs at vv. D 10-16:

Nu me wule swopen þine flor and þet flet clensien,  
for hit is h«eom þe» lōpre þe þu þeron leiȝe;  
heo wulleþ mid holiwatere beworpen ec þeo w«owes»,  
ble«t»sien ham ȝeorne to burewen ham wiþ þe,  
beren ut þin bedstrau, b«eornen» hit mid fure;

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<sup>79</sup> ‘yġrd (n.(2)) 6(d)’, *MED Online*, <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED53890>>, last accessed October 2018.

<sup>80</sup> Moffat, p. 86.

<sup>81</sup> Christopher Daniell, *Death and Burial in Medieval England 1066-1550* (London and New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 148.

<sup>82</sup> See Philip Rahtz, ‘Grave Orientation’, *Archaeological Journal*, 135.1 (1978), 1-14.

<sup>83</sup> According to the *OED*, the first attestation of *yard* in the sense of ‘measuring-rod’ dates back to circa 1000-1050. See ‘yard, n.2 (†7)’, in John A. Simpson, Edmund S.C. Weiner, and Michael Proffitt, eds, *The Oxford English Dictionary Online* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition in progress), <[www.oed.com](http://www.oed.com)>, last accessed October 2018. In the *MED*, the ‘yard’ of the *Worcester Fragments* is the earliest attestation of the word in the sense of ‘rod for measuring a yard, yardstick’; see ‘yġrd (n.(2)) 6(d)’, *MED Online*, <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED53890>>, last accessed October 2018.

þus þu ert nu ilufed seopþen þu me forlure:

al hit is re(owliche) þin siþ efter þin wrecche lif.<sup>84</sup>

(Now your floor shall be swept and the paved floor cleaned, as it's loathsome for them, because you lay on there; they shall sprinkle each wall with holy water, zealously bless themselves in order to be protected against you; carry outside the straw for bedding, burn it with fire. This is the way you are loved since you were separated from me: wholly grievous is your fate after your wretched life).

Apart from the last verse (one of the lines that recurs throughout the poem)<sup>85</sup>, this passage seems to recall the prophylactic measures meant to avoid spreading an infection, with an overlap between medicine and religious superstition typical of the Anglo-Saxon medicine.<sup>86</sup> This tendency towards an “encyclopaedic” kind of poetry has already been observed in the ‘Signs of Death’ passage of *De Sancto Andrea*, a motif which has both a diagnostic and a warning function. Among the various Early Middle English lyrics on the ‘Signs of Death’, the short poem on the *Proprietates Mortis* preserved in Cambridge, Trinity College B.1.45 (43), fol. 73<sup>v</sup> (thirteenth century) is particularly close to, and maybe has been influenced

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<sup>84</sup> Moffat, p. 70.

<sup>85</sup> It also occurs at vv. C 15, D 42 and F 19.

<sup>86</sup> For an overview of Anglo-Saxon medicine, see Wilfrid Bonser, *The Medical Background of Anglo-Saxon England: A Study in History, Psychology and Folklore*, Publications of the Wellcome Historical Medical Library, ns 3 (London: Wellcome Historical Medical Library, 1963); Audrey L. Meaney, ‘The Anglo-Saxon View of the Causes of Illness’, in *Health, Disease and Healing in Medieval Culture*, ed. by Sheila Campbell, Bert Hall, and David Klausner (London: Macmillan, 1992), pp. 12-33; Malcom L. Cameron, *Anglo-Saxon Medicine*, Cambridge Studies in Anglo-Saxon England, 7 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). Notably, the ‘worm’ – a key feature of the anatomical description of vv. C 38-50 quoted above – was also considered by Anglo-Saxons as a major cause of disease, being responsible for attacks from ‘outside’ to the integrity of the body; see Bonser, 277-81; Meaney, p. 14.

by, the *Worcester Fragments*:

Wanne mine eyhnen misten,  
and mine heren sissen,  
and mi nose koldet,  
and mi tunge ffoldet,  
and mi rude slaket,  
And mine lippes blaken,  
and mi muþ grennet,  
and mi spotel rennet,  
and min her riset,  
and min herte griset,  
and mine honden biuien,  
and mine ffet stiuien,  
al to late, al to late,  
wanne þe bere ys ate gate.

Panne y schel fflutte  
ffrom bedde te fflore,  
ffrom fflore to here,  
ffrom here to bere,  
ffrom bere to putte,  
and te putt ffor-dut.  
þanne lyd min hus vppe min nose,  
off al þis world ne gyffe ihic a pese.<sup>87</sup>

(When my eyes become dim, and my ears stop hiss, and my nose becomes  
cold, and my tongue folds, and my face slackens, and my lips turn to black,

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<sup>87</sup> Edition in Carleton Brown, ed., *English Lyrics of the Thirteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1932), p. 130. ‘Ne yeven a pese’ is an idiom, literally “not give a pea”; according to the *MED*, it means ‘not care for/of’: see ‘pēse (n.) 4(b)’, *MED Online*, <<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED33168>>, last accessed October 2018.



and my mouth grimaces, and my spittle runs, and my hair stands on end,  
and my heart trembles, and my hands shiver, and my feet become rigid: all  
too late, all too late, when the bier is at the gate. Then I shall go from bed  
to the floor, from the floor to the shroud, from the shroud to the bier, from  
the bier to the pit, and the pit is sealed. Then my house lies upon my nose,  
and I care nothing for all this world).

Like the *Worcester Fragments*, this disturbing short poem begins with the image of the failing senses (a couple of symptoms are the same), and then gives a brief account of the preparation of the burial. The most striking resemblance between the lyrics is the image of the grave as a ‘house’ lying upon the nose (v. 21), paralleled by the *Worcester Fragments*, vv. C 29-31, where the ‘roof’ lies on the body’s chest.<sup>88</sup> The preparation of the burial in *Proprietates Mortis* could have also been influenced by the lyric *If man him biðocte*, which, as Woolf points out, was extremely popular and often copied between the thirteenth and the fifteenth century.<sup>89</sup> The passage in the *Worcester Fragments*, in turn, ‘perhaps contributed to the tradition of describing the preparations for burial which lies behind “If man him biðocte”, and finally they may have provided the source for the earliest lyric version of the Signs’.<sup>90</sup> The motif of the ‘house’ is also found in other two poetical

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<sup>88</sup> A list of occurrences of this image is in Eve Siebert, ‘Body and Soul Poems in Old and Middle English’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Saint Louis University, 2008), pp. 233-34.

<sup>89</sup> Woolf, p. 78. An edition of *If man him biðocte* is in Brown, pp. 19-20, titled *Memorare Novissima Tua*; see also pp. 173-75 for a discussion on the many different versions of this lyric preserved throughout the Middle English phase.

<sup>90</sup> Woolf, p. 80. Among the Middle English ‘Signs of Death’ poems, it is worth mentioning *Wenne þin eyen beit ihut*, a short poem preserved in Trinity College B.14.39, f. 28<sup>r</sup> and printed in Robbins, p. 291; *Hwenne þin heou blokeþ*, another short poem, preserved in Oxford, Jesus College, MS 29, f. 189<sup>r</sup> and in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 416, f. 109; both versions were printed by Brown, p. 221; an English passage of the *Fasciculus Morum* included in at least seven of its known thirty manuscripts (see Robbins, p. 292). See also Brown, p. 222; Woolf, pp. 78-82.

pieces here discussed, *The Grave* and *Latemest Day*.<sup>91</sup>

*The Grave*, a short poem preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 343, second half of the twelfth century, fol. 170<sup>r</sup>, is entirely based on the house-grave comparison.<sup>92</sup> I quote the full poem from the manuscript, edited with a modern layout and punctuation:

Ðe wes bold 3ebyld er þu iboren were,  
ðe wes molde imynt er ðu of moder come;  
ac hit nes no idiht, ne þeo deopnes imeten,  
nes 3yt iloced hu long hit þe were.  
Nu me þe bringæð þer ðu beon scealt.  
Nu me sceal þe meten, 7 þa mold(e) seoðða.  
Ne bið no þin hus healice itinbred:  
hit bið unheh and lah, þon(n)e þu list þer inne;  
ðe helewages beoð la3e, sid-wages unhege;  
þe rof bið ibyld þire broste ful neh.  
Swa ðu scealt on mold(e) wunien ful cald(e).  
Dimme 7 deorcæ þet den fulæt on ho(n)d(e).  
Durelas is þ(æt) hus, 7 dearc hit is wið innen.  
Ðær þu bist feste bidytt, 7 dæð hefð þa cæ3e;  
ladlic is þ(æt) eorð hus 7 grim inne to wunien.

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<sup>91</sup> Also later occurring in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale*, in the passage on Arcite's death: see CTI.2798-2806 (a 'Signs of Death' description), and l. 2809, 'his spirit chaunged hous and wente ther'. References to Chaucer are from Larry D. Benson, ed., *The Riverside Chaucer*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, reissued with a new foreword by Christopher Cannon (Oxford: Oxford University Press Paperback, 2008). The image of the house could ultimately have been drawn from Job 30:23, 'scio quia morti tradas me ubi constituta domus est omni viventi'. See Benjamin P. Kurz, 'Gifer the Worm: an Essay toward the History of an Idea', *University of California Publications in English*, 2.2 (1929), 235-61, at p. 255.

<sup>92</sup> Edition in John W. Conlee, ed., *Middle English Debate Poetry. A Critical Anthology* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991), pp. 3-6.

Ðer þu scealt wunien 7 wurmes þe todeleð.  
 Ðus þu bist ileȝd 7 ladæst þine fronden.  
 Nefst ðu nenne freond þe þe wylle faren to.  
 Ðæt efre wule lokien hu þe þ(æt) hus þe likie.  
 Ðæt æfre undon ðe wule ða dure, 7 þe æfter lihten:  
 for sone þu bist ladlic 7 lad to iseonne.<sup>93</sup>

(Before you were born, a house was built for you, and before you were born, the earth was measured for you; but it is not prepared, the depth is not measured, nor it is arranged how long it may be. Now you are brought to the place where you shall stay. Now you are being measured, and the earth after you. Your house is not built up high: it is not tall and is low when you lie therein; the end-walls are low, the sidewalls are not tall; the roof is built very close to your chest. So you shall dwell very coldly in earth. Dim and dark, the den will soon become filthy. The house is doorless and it is dark within. There you are firmly shut, and Death owns the keys; the earth-house is loathsome and dwelling therein is dreary. You shall dwell there and worms will split you open. Thus you are laid down and you are most loathsome to your friends. You do not have a single friend who would visit you. Who would ever look at how you like that house. Who ever would unlock the door for you, and comfort you: because soon you will be loathsome and horrid to see).

This text has often been considered by scholars to be part of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature (probably because of the textual relationship with the *Worcester Fragments*) and has been also included in Conlee’s anthology of Middle English debates because ‘it provides an appropriate starting point for a consideration of

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<sup>93</sup> This edition improves and replaces my own previous edition, printed in Claudio Cataldi, ‘The Grave (Oxford, Bodleian Library, Bodley 343, f. 170): una proposta d’analisi’, in *Lettura di Ælfric*, ed. by Vittoria Dolcetti Corazza and Renato Gendre (Torino: Edizioni dell’Orso, 2012), pp. 191-205, at pp. 197-98.

the Middle English Body and Soul tradition'.<sup>94</sup> Nonetheless, although *The Grave* features several motifs that define the 'Soul and Body' sub-genre (such as the food-for-worms theme, the paltriness of the grave, and the neglectful friends), it lacks an explicit 'Soul's Address to the Body'. Furthermore, nothing in the text would suggest a debate structure. The first editors have often classified it as a fragment of a longer poem; such is Buchholz' opinion, who also claims that it could even be another fragment originally belonging to the *Worcester Fragments*.<sup>95</sup> The text of *The Grave* in MS Bodley 343 also preserves a later addition: a thirteenth-century hand wrote the beginning of a head-to-toe description in the bottom of the page, which looks to me like a rough-and-ready attempt to continue the extant text.<sup>96</sup> I agree with Dudley's view on this lyric: it must be considered a finished work until proven otherwise. There is also no textual evidence that a soul is speaking, nor does its detached tone resemble the desperate soul's complaint.<sup>97</sup> In my view, *The Grave* must be put in the wider

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<sup>94</sup> Conlee, p. 4.

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Buchholz, p. v.

<sup>96</sup> 'For sone bið þin hæfet faxes bireued, | al bið ðes faxes feirnes forsceden, | næle hit nan mit fingres feire stracien', "because soon your head will be deprived of hair, all the beauty of your hair dissipated, no more sweetly stroked by fingers". This addition has raised some scholarly interest; for a paleographic discussion, see the opposite views in Jennifer Ramsay, 'A possible "Tremulous Hand" Addition to *The Grave* in MS Bodley 343', *Notes and Queries*, 49.2 (2002), 178-80, and Christine Franzen, 'On the Attributions of Additions in Oxford, Bodleian MS Bodley 343 to the Tremulous Hand of Worcester', *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews*, 19.1 (2006), 7-8. Siebert suggests that the thirteenth-century addition may have been inspired by the *ubi sunt* passage of the *Royal Debate*: see Eve Siebert, 'A Possible Source for the Addition to *The Grave*', *ANQ: A Quarterly Journal of Short Articles, Notes and Reviews*, 19.4 (2006), 8-16. On the *Royal Debate*, see Chapter 3.2.

<sup>97</sup> See Dudley, 'The Grave', p. 8. For a recent study of this short poem, see Siebert, pp. 67-103; see also my analysis in Cataldi, pp. 191-205.

context of the increased interest in burial imagery typical of the emerging Middle English lyric, as argued by Dudley<sup>98</sup> and Lerer,<sup>99</sup> and not as a ‘Soul and Body’ literary work per se. Nevertheless, it is indubitable that some kind of direct relationship between the *Worcester Fragments* and *The Grave* exists. The two texts, as already noted since Buchholz’s edition,<sup>100</sup> share several common features:

1. The measuring of the corpse (*The Grave*, v. 6: ‘nu me sceal þe meten, 7 þa mold⟨e⟩ seoðða’; *Worcester Fragments*, v. A33: ‘mon hine met mid one ȝerde and þa mol⟨de⟩ seopþen’);
2. The metaphor of the grave as a ‘doorless house’ (*The Grave*, v. 13: ‘dureleas is þ(æt) hus, 7 dearc hit is wið innen’; it occurs twice in the *Worcester Fragments*, vv. B40 and E8: ‘on deope sæþe, on durelease huse’);
3. The ‘roof of the house’ lying on the body’s chest (*The Grave*, v. 10: ‘þe rof bið ibyld þire broste ful neh’; *Worcester Fragments* v. C31: ‘þin rof liiþ on þine breoste ful ⟨nei⟩h’);
4. The ‘keys of Death’ (*The Grave*, v. 14: ‘ðær þu bist feste bidytt, 7 dæð hefð þa cæȝe; *Worcester Fragments*, v. F16: ‘nu þu ert adumbed and deaþ haueþ þeo keiȝe’).

As stated above, the image of the grave as a house with the roof lying upon the body is also found in *Latemest Day* and in *Proprietates Mortis*,<sup>101</sup> but the

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<sup>98</sup> Dudley, p. 442.

<sup>99</sup> Seth Lerer, ‘The Genre of the Grave and the Origins of the Middle English Lyric’, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 58.2 (1997), 127-61.

<sup>100</sup> Buchholz, pp. iv-v; see also Heningham, pp. 291-307; Moffat, p. 41.

<sup>101</sup> Also noted by Heningham, pp. 305. Woolf, p. 83, points out that an earlier description of the roof lying upon the man’s chest is found in the ninth Vercelli homily.

resemblances between *The Grave* and the *Worcester Fragments* are striking. There can be little doubt that a direct relationship between the texts exists: to my knowledge, there is no other text featuring the ‘doorless house’, which is surely an effective image, although quite odd (a doorless house surely does not need a key!).<sup>102</sup> The main issue is which text influenced the other. Like Dudley,<sup>103</sup> I am inclined to think that the *Worcester Fragments* embedded portions from *The Grave*. The grounds to justify this are not merely a matter of date and/or length of the text, but the fact that the *Worcester Fragments* seem to have absorbed a wide range of material, especially of a homiletic and penitential nature. There is, for instance, the motif of the smallness of the grave, which is something of a commonplace in the Early Middle English religious lyrics; apart from texts like the *Worcester Fragments*, *The Grave* and (as we shall see below) *Latemest Day*, it is featured, for example, in the thirteenth-century six-line poem *When the Turf is Thy Tower*, preserved in Trinity College B.14.39, fol. 47<sup>v</sup>:

Wen þe turuf is þi tuur,  
 & þi put is þi bour,  
 Pi wel & ti wite þrote  
 ssulen wormes to note.  
 Wat helpiþ þe þenne  
 Al þe worilde wne?<sup>104</sup>

(When the turf is your tower, and the pit is your bower, your skin and your white throat shall be for the use of worms. Of what help are, then, all the delights of the world to you?)

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<sup>102</sup> The image of the keys of death could arguably derive from Apocalypse, 1.18: ‘et vivus et fui mortuus et ecce sum vivens in saecula saeculorum et habeo claves mortis et inferni’, even if in this case it is Christ who owns the keys, and not Death. See also Cataldi, p. 201.

<sup>103</sup> Dudley, pp. 431-36.

<sup>104</sup> Edition in Brown, p. 54. For an analysis of this short lyric see Woolf, pp. 82-83.

In addition to lyrics on death and on the grave, which represent important sources and analogues of the *Worcester Fragments*, examples of a homiletic inspiration behind the composition of the poem are scattered around the poem. Heningham argues that the many Biblical quotations embedded in the text – translated by corresponding English lines – and the loose metrical structure resemble Ælfric’s rhythmical prose.<sup>105</sup> The inclusion of Latin material and its translation and expansion is, as seen above, a feature of Trinity Homily XXIX *De Sancto Andrea*, and of the *Trinity Homilies* in general. Perhaps of more importance are some textual parallels, noted by both Heningham<sup>106</sup> and Moffat, between the *Worcester Fragments* and the Old English ‘Soul and Body’ homilies. Two of these parallels are particularly close: the section where the soul says that it was a clean spirit sent from God (vv. D 31-36) is an analogue to some passages in *Vercelli IV*, listed by Moffat,<sup>107</sup> in the *Worcester Fragments*, the soul claims to be “God’s daughter” (‘godes douhter’, v. G 31)<sup>108</sup>, an expression also found in the *Junius Homily* (‘ic wæs Godes dohter, and ængla swistor gescapen’).<sup>109</sup> A homiletic source could have also inspired the extended hedgehog simile, vv. F 20-33:

For þu were biſet þicke mid ſunne⟨n⟩  
 and alle ⟨heo⟩ weren prikiende ſo piles on ile.  
 He biþ þicke mid piles ne p(ri)kieþ he⟨o⟩ hine⟨ nowiht,  
 for al biþ þ(et) ſofte iwend to him ſulfen  
 þ(et) ne mawen his pil⟨es pri⟩kien hine ſore,

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<sup>105</sup> Heningham, pp. 292-95. On some of these Latin quotations, see John Johansen, ‘The Source and Translation of some Latin Quotations in *The Worcester Fragments*’, *Notes and Queries*, 32 (1985), 445-47.

<sup>106</sup> Heningham, pp. 298-303.

<sup>107</sup> Moffat, p. 97.

<sup>108</sup> Moffat, p. 80.

<sup>109</sup> Luiselli Fadda, p. 167. “I was created God’s daughter and sister of angels”.

for al biþ þ(et) sceanpe him iwend fromward:

so þu we<re> mid sunne iset al wiþine.

Þeo sunfule pikes p(ri)kieþ me ful sore,

ac <al þet> softe was iwend to þe suluen

and efre þet scerpe scorede me touwar<d,

for> heo weren iwend so me wurst was:

ic was mid þine p(ri)ckunge ipin<ed ful> sore.

Ac nu me wulleþ prikien þeo pikes inne helle,

pinien me ful so<re all> for þine sunne.<sup>110</sup>

(For you were abundantly studded with sins, and they all were stinging like quills on a hedgehog. It is studded with quills that don't prick it at all, for all the softness is directed towards itself; its quills can't do it any harm, for all the sharpness is directed away: similarly, you were fixed with sins all within. Your sinful quills pricked me painfully, but all the softness was directed towards yourself and the sharpness pointed towards me, for they were directed so that I was badly ill: I was painfully tortured because of your pricking. But now the the spikes in hell will prick me and torture me painfully because of your sins).

Moffat notes that an ultimate source for this bizarre passage has not yet been found; moreover, 'what renders the image ineffectual [...] is the position external to the body which the soul must occupy if it is to be pricked by the quills, i.e., the sins. An inside-out hedgehog would solve this problem!'<sup>111</sup> The association of sins with a hedgehog's spine is found in Augustine, *Enarrationes in Psalmos*, CIII.III.18, where it is said that the hedgehog is 'animal spinis coopertum. Spinae quid significant, nisi peccatores? Qui peccat quotidie, etiamsi non magna peccata,

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<sup>110</sup> Moffat, p. 77.

<sup>111</sup> Moffat, p. 102.



minutissimis spinis coopertus est',<sup>112</sup> “an animal covered by spines. What do spines mean, if not sinners? He who commits sins every day, although not major sins, is covered by very small spines”. A significant analogue is Homily XIX of *Homeliae de oneribus prophetis Isaiae* by Ælred of Rievaulx, which features a hedgehog metaphor that shows some similarities with the passage in the *Worcester Fragments*:

Fiat, Domine, cor meum sicut ericius plenus spinis, ut singulorum peccatorum meorum memoria quasi spinis singulis compungatur, et sicut totam animam meam uitia possidebant, ita totam occupet compunctio salutaris, sicque libidinum suarum recordatione, quasi caenosis paludibus stercorata, *paenitentiae fructus* producere mereatur.<sup>113</sup>

(Lord, let my heart be as full of prickles as a hedgehog, so that it may be pricked by the memory of every one of my sins as if by individual spines; and as vices possessed my entire soul, so may a salutary compunction occupy it; and so by the memory of its sinful desires, as if manured by muddy swamps, it may deserve to produce the fruit of penitence).

The hedgehog simile of the *Worcester Fragments* seem to parallel and reverse Ælred's invocation. Significantly enough, the subsequent passage (vv. F 34-42), regarding the soul as the 'seventh creation', has been recently traced back to an

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<sup>112</sup> Eligius Dekkers and Johannes Fraipont, eds, *Sancti Aurelii Augustini Enarrationes in Psalmos CI-CL*, CCSL, 40 (Turnhout: Brepols 1956), p. 1515. I am most thankful to Professor Bella Millett (pers. comm., 2018) for this suggestion.

<sup>113</sup> Ælred of Rievaulx, *Opera omnia v. Homeliae de oneribus prophetis Isaiae*, ed. by Gaetano Raciti, CCCM, 2D (Turnhout: Brepols, 2005), p. 169. On the sermons of Ælred of Rievaulx, see Domenico Pezzini, 'The Sermons of Aelred of Rievaulx', in *A Companion to Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167)*, ed. by Marsha L. Dutton, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition, 76 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 73-97.

Ælfrician source by Pelle.<sup>114</sup> It is therefore clear that our poet, apart from contemporary death-related lyrics, also relied on homiletic material for his composition, not only from the previous ‘Soul and Body’ literature but also from a wide range of sources. To sum up, Henningham’s opinion on the genesis of the poem is largely sound:

Apparently, at some time not very long after the Conquest, an Englishman, inspired by the pre-Conquest example, decided to write in English an edifying poem with the same meter, style, and general appeal as Ælfric’s *Be Pære Halgan Clænnysse* or *Sermo in Natale Unius Confessoris*. For his plot he chose the speech of the soul to its body, an exemplum which he had heard – perhaps many times – in sermons. This outline he proceeded to fill in with all the appropriate material which he had in the back of his head: scenes from actual life, scraps of old verse, and above all other themes from the *memento-mori* sermons in which he had found his plot. Occasionally, like Ælfric before him, he adorned his verses with a line or two from the Bible in its original Latin dress. Since, however, he was an Englishman writing in English, the handiest material was that which had come to him already in English and much of which would need but the slightest alteration to fit his theme and his verse. Because he had a gift for concrete detail and striking phrase, this poet’s “making” was a success.<sup>115</sup>

In the literary history of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme, the *Worcester Fragments* occupy a special place. This poem reworked earlier homiletic and lyrical influences and, at the same time, provided more specific characterisation of the sinner and a ‘rich repository of images and ideas’<sup>116</sup> that will be fully developed in the thirteenth-century and later ‘Soul and Body’ literature:

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<sup>114</sup> Stephen Pelle, ‘An Ælfrician Source for a Passage in the *Worcester Fragments*’, *Notes and Queries*, 63.2 (2016), 186-91.

<sup>115</sup> Henningham, pp. 306-07.

<sup>116</sup> Conlee, p. xxv.

Contained in the *Worcester Fragments*, for example, are descriptions of the signs of death's approach, the humiliating and insensitive treatment the body receives prior to burial, the paltriness of the grave which will be the body's future "house", the *ubi sunt* formula, the body's dissolution in the grave, and the greed and faithlessness of the body's heirs – all of which become commonplaces in the body and soul dialogues and debate poems.<sup>117</sup>

## 2.4. PONDERING THE LAST DAY

The influence of the *Worcester Fragments* on the subsequent vernacular 'Soul and Body' literature is evident in *Latemest Day*. The list of verbal parallels between the two works, compiled by Brown, proves conclusively that the Worcester poem was a primary source for this thirteenth-century text.<sup>118</sup> Heningham even calls *Latemest Day* 'little more than a condensed version of *The Worcester Fragments*':<sup>119</sup> a meaningful definition, even if too overstated, as I shall show.

*Latemest Day* raises a key philological issue. This poem, in mono-rhyme quatrains, is preserved in four thirteenth-century manuscripts: Trinity College B.14.39, fols 43<sup>v</sup>-45<sup>v</sup>; London, British Library, MS Cotton Caligula A.ix, fols 247<sup>r</sup>-248<sup>v</sup>; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86, fols 198<sup>r</sup>-200<sup>r</sup>; and Jesus College 29, fols 183<sup>v</sup>-184<sup>v</sup>.<sup>120</sup> The Cotton and Jesus manuscripts contain four introductory stanzas not found in the Trinity and Digby manuscripts; according to Brown, these stanzas probably did not belong to the archetype but were added

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<sup>117</sup> Conlee, p. xxv.

<sup>118</sup> For the relationship between the two poems, see Bruce, 193-201; Brown, pp. 189-91; Heningham, p. 293; Woolf, pp. 94-97.

<sup>119</sup> Heningham, p. 293

<sup>120</sup> Manuscripts' dates are quoted from Reichl, p. 415.

as a preamble.<sup>121</sup> The Cotton and Jesus manuscripts preserve the same order of stanzas.<sup>122</sup> Both Digby and Trinity lack the preamble; the order of the stanzas in Digby is close to the one in the Cotton and Jesus manuscripts, whereas the Trinity text shows a different order.<sup>123</sup> Brown concludes that:

The Trinity MS. preserves archaic forms (traces of which survive here and there in *D* [Digby] which have been displaced in *CJ* [Cotton-Jesus] in order to make the text more easily intelligible. On the other hand, the Trinity MS. presents a re-arrangement of the text, the original order of which is essentially preserved in *CJD* [Cotton-Jesus-Digby].<sup>124</sup>

Most importantly, in all the four manuscripts *Latemest Day* is preceded by another poem in the same metre, titled *Doomsday* by Brown.<sup>125</sup> The four versions of *Doomsday* agree ‘closely in content and arrangement’, but Digby also includes a two-stanza expansion before the conclusive stanza.<sup>126</sup> It is also worth noting that MS Trinity College B.14.39 and MS Digby 86 also preserve two of the three versions of the ‘Soul and Body’ debate *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*,<sup>127</sup> in Digby 86, a verse from the two-stanza expansion of *Doomsday* is borrowed from this

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<sup>121</sup> Brown, p. 188.

<sup>122</sup> Brown, pp. 188-189, 191.

<sup>123</sup> Brown, pp. 188-191.

<sup>124</sup> Brown, p. 191.

<sup>125</sup> Brown, pp. 42-46. All the four versions of *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day* are printed by Karl Reichl, ed., *Religiöse Dichtung im englischen Hochmittelalter. Untersuchung und Edition der Handschrift B. 14. 39 des Trinity College in Cambridge*, Münchener Universitäts-schriften, Philosophische Fakultät, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie, 1 (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1973), pp. 406-36.

<sup>126</sup> Brown, p. 187-88.

<sup>127</sup> See Chapter 3.7.

vernacular debate (which immediately precedes *Doomsday* in the manuscript).<sup>128</sup>

According to Brown, *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day* ‘with little doubt are the work of the same author’,<sup>129</sup> but whether the two poems should actually be considered a single work is a vexed issue.<sup>130</sup> For example, Siebert argues that:

While the two poems may have originally been separate, however, they seem to have become conflated at some point, with all four scribes assuming they formed a single work. This conflation may account for certain inconsistencies in “The Latemest Day”.<sup>131</sup>

The texts of *Latemest Day* and *Doomsday* in these four manuscripts, however, differ in some subtle ways from each other, and the differences reveal that, while most copyists considered *Latemest Day* and *Doomsday* as separate pieces, at least the Trinity copyist treated them as a single poem. The Trinity manuscript lacks the opening invitation to reflection found in *Latemest Day*, an omission which seems to link the poem with the conclusion of *Doomsday*.<sup>132</sup> While the incipit of *Latemest Day* in the Cotton and Jesus manuscripts is ‘þenche we on þe laste dai’, and in Digby ‘þench of þe latemeste dai’, the Trinity manuscript reads ‘þene latemeste dai’,<sup>133</sup> which seems logically connected to the concluding exhortation of *Doomsday*:

Bidde we ure leuedye, suetis alre þinge,  
þat heo beore ure herinde to þen heuene kinge,  
þat for is holie nome ant for hire herindinge

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<sup>128</sup> Brown, p. 188. The three poems were printed as a single work in Stengel’s edition of MS Digby 86: see Edmund Stengel, ed., *Codicem Manu Scriptum Digby 86 in Bibliotheca Bodleiana Asservatum* (Halle: Libraria Orphanotropei, 1871), pp. 93-101.

<sup>129</sup> Brown, p. 187.

<sup>130</sup> A summary of the different positions is in Siebert, pp. 151-52.

<sup>131</sup> Siebert, pp. 153-54.

<sup>132</sup> See Reichl, p. 414.

<sup>133</sup> Reichl, p. 420.

þat he ure soule into heoueneriche bringe.<sup>134</sup>

(Let us pray our Lady, the sweetest of things, to carry our petition to the King of Heaven, so that through His holy name and Her intercession He can bring our souls to the kingdom of heaven).

On the other hand, the other three versions seem to treat *Latemest Day* as a separate piece. Brown notes that the preamble in Cotton-Jesus reinforces the separation between the two texts.<sup>135</sup> In the Digby manuscript, *Doomsday* is concluded by *Amen*,<sup>136</sup> which signals that the copyist considered it to be concluded and separate from *Latemest Day*.

Given the shared interest in motifs of repentance and eschatological imagery, it is not surprising that *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day* were considered either as a succession of two poems or even as a single piece. *Doomsday* is, as a whole, a poem on the Final Judgment, with reference to the Signs preceding the Doom and to the Gospel's episode of the Judgment of the Righteous and the Wicked, Matthew 25.31-46. *Latemest Day* is a reflection on the moment of death, with a developed 'Soul's Address to the Body', concluded by a vision of Hell and of the Devil.

*Latemest Day* features virtually all the motifs typical of the Early Middle English 'Soul's Address' texts, motifs mostly drawn from the *Worcester Fragments*,<sup>137</sup> and reworked in quatrains:

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<sup>134</sup> Reichl, p. 414.

<sup>135</sup> Brown, p. 187.

<sup>136</sup> See Reichl, p. 414.

<sup>137</sup> See a list of parallels between *Latemest Day* and Fragment A of the *Worcester Fragments* in Mary Patricia Tuck, *A Study of Body-and-Soul Poetry in Old and Middle English* (unpublished doctoral thesis, North Texas State University, 1979), p. 97.

1. The 'Signs of Death' (vv. 25-28);<sup>138</sup>
2. The preparation of the burial and the former pride of the body (vv. 33-36);
3. The image of friends eager to plunder the body's wealth (v. 38);
4. An *ubi sunt* section that stresses the body's futile fondness for rich clothes and food and how friends are far away (vv. 49-56);
5. The disregard for Christian duties (vv. 61-68);
6. The grave-house simile and the measurement of the corpse (vv. 73-80);
7. The motif of decomposition (vv. 85-88);
8. Another *ubi sunt* passage, with the food-for-worms motif (vv. 89-92);
9. The early motif of the contrast between the deeds of the body and a condition of the soul (vv. 93-96).

In spite of its modern title and of the initial invocation, *Latemest Day* is also framed by the deathbed setting, as the other Early Middle English 'Soul's Address' poetry.<sup>139</sup> Nothing in the poem suggests that the Soul is speaking at the Final Judgment and the motifs of the 'Signs of Death', the decomposition, and the grave-house would make little sense in that context. The death-bed setting of the poem is particularly evident in the section where the Soul foresees its future in hell and describes the humbleness of the grave (vv. 69-80):

Li, apariede bali, þer neauer þu ne arise!  
 Hpenne ich þenche þe uppon ful sore me mai agrise;  
 For ich schal bernen in fur & chiuerin in ise,  
 & euer beon in pinen a feole kunne pise.

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<sup>138</sup> Verse numbers and quotations of *Latemest Day* refers to the MS Cotton Caligula A.ix version, supposedly closer to the order of the archetype, and printed in Brown, pp. 50-54.

<sup>139</sup> Woolf, p. 94, argues for a Judgment Day setting; Siebert, p. 160, calls it a 'confused setting', but she seems more inclined to think that the scene is set at the moment of death.

Nu schal þin halle Mid spade beon iproȝt,  
 And þu schald þerinne, precche, beon ibroȝt;  
 Nu schulen þine peden Alle beon isoȝt,  
 Me pule spopen þin hus & ut mid þe spoft.

Pi bur is sone ibuld þer þu schald punien inne,  
 Þe rof, þe firste, schal ligge o þine chinne;  
 Nu þe sculen pormes punien pið-inne,  
 Ne mai me heom vt driuen pið nones kunnes ginne.<sup>140</sup>

(Lie, cursed body, as you will never rise! When I think of you, I can grievously be afraid; because I shall burn in fire and shiver in ice, and I shall forever be in many kinds of pain. Now your hall will be worked with a spade, and you, wretched, shall be brought therein; now all your garments shall be sought, and your house will be swept with you out of it. The bower where you shall dwell is soon built, and the roof, the ceiling, will lie on your chin; now the worms will dwell in you, and they cannot be driven out with any kind of device).

The influence of the *Worcester Fragments* on these verses is indisputable. Nonetheless, recent scholars have generally overlooked another major source for *Latemest Day*: as noted by Brown, the final section, dealing with the vision of hell, has some interesting parallels with *Poema Morale*.

*Poema Morale* is the poetic reflection of an old man on life, concluded by a visionary passage on Heaven and Hell. With a metre modelled after the Latin septenary, the poem is the earliest example of this verse form in English.<sup>141</sup> *Poema Morale* is preserved in seven manuscripts, two of which are the same

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<sup>140</sup> Brown, p. 52.

<sup>141</sup> See Hall, II, p. 327.



codices preserving the Trinity and Lambeth homilies (MS Trinity College, MS B.14.52 and London, Lambeth Palace, MS 487 respectively) and one of which, Jesus College 29, also includes *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day*.<sup>142</sup> Scholars have noted a close analogue to the poem in the Anglo-Norman *Le romaunz de temtacioun de secle* of Guischart de Beauliu.<sup>143</sup> Below is my comparison between some passages of *Latemest Day* and *Poema Morale*, a comparison based on Brown's notes but revised and expanded.<sup>144</sup>

1. The indescribable pains of hell: *Latemest Day*, vv. 29-30: 'ne miȝte no tunge tellen þat euer pes iboren | þe stronge pine of helle, þah he hedde isporen; *Poema Morale*, vv. 289-290: 'nemai non herte hit þenche ne tunge hit ne mai telle | hwu muchele pine ne hwu fele senden in helle'. The image is rather formulaic; a close parallel, unnoted by Brown, occurs in the Middle English verse rendition of the *Visio Pauli* preserved in

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<sup>142</sup> On the manuscripts of *Poema Morale*, see Hall, II, pp. 312-313. An edition of the poem is in *Id.*, I, pp. 30-53. The first critical edition, based on six of its seven known manuscripts, is in Hermann Lewin, ed., *Das mittellenglische Poema Morale* (Halle: Max Niemeyer, 1881).

<sup>143</sup> See Hall, II, p. 329. Edition in Arvid Gabrielson, ed., *Le sermon de Guischart de Beauliu. Édition critique de tous les manuscrits connus avec introduction* (Uppsala: Akademiska Bokhandeln; Leipzig: Harrassowitz, 1909). See Laurent Brun, ed., 'Guischart de Beaulieu', in *Archives de littérature du Moyen Âge (ARLIMA)*, <[www.arlima.net/eh/guischart\\_de\\_beauliu.html#>](http://www.arlima.net/eh/guischart_de_beauliu.html#>), last accessed October 2018 ; Ruth J. Dean with the collaboration of Maureen B.M. Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts*, Occasional Publications Series, 3 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999), n. 597.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Brown, pp. 190-91. For this comparison, I use the version *Poema Morale* preserved in MS Trinity College, MS B.14.52 and printed in Hall, I, pp. 30-53. Brown referred to the version in Oxford, Jesus College, 29, part II, fols. 169<sup>r</sup>-174<sup>v</sup> (242<sup>r</sup>-247<sup>v</sup>), printed in Richard Morris, ed., *An Old English Miscellany: A Bestiary, Kentish Sermons, Proverbs of Alfred and Religious Poems of the 13th Century*, EETS, OS 49 (London: Trübner, 1872), pp. 58-71. Unlike Brown, I quote only the Cotton Caligula A ix version of *Latemest Day*.

Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108, vv. 37-38: ‘Nis no tounge þat al may telle | Of þe strongne peynes of helle’;<sup>145</sup>

2. The sinner must alternatively go into heat and cold: *Latemest Day*, v. 71: ‘for ich scal bernen in fur & chiuerin in ise’; *Poema Morale*, 236-238: ‘hie fareð fram hate [to] chele fram chele to hate | [þ]an hie beð in þe hate chele hem þuncheð blisse | [þ]an hie cumeð eft to chele of hate hie habbeð misse’;
3. The creatures of hell: *Latemest Day*, v. 103: ‘þat schal i-mete moni a ful piht’; *Poema Morale*, v. 285: ‘þat beð ateliche fiend 7 Eiseliche wihten’. *Ateliche* (“horrible”) is also used in *Latemest Day*, v. 115: ‘nis is no þing aliue þat so ateliche beo’;
4. The boiling pitch: *Latemest Day*, vv. 105-106: ‘in ful a bitter bað baþien ich schal naked | of pisch & brimeston pallinde is imaked’; *Poema Morale*, v. 222: ‘his bað sal be wallinde pich his bed barnende glede’; v. 241: ‘[þ]ar is pich þat afre walleð þar sulle wunien inne’. Unnoted by Brown;
5. The eternal fire: *Latemest Day*, vv. 109-110: ‘pah al þat fur in þis world to-gedere pere ibroht | azeines þare hete nere hit al noht’; *Poema Morale*, vv. 252-253: ‘[n]e mai hit quenche salt water ne auene stream ne sture | [þ]is is þat fur þat afre barneð ne mai no with [hit] quenche’. This last parallel noted by Brown actually looks less convincing.

It is therefore possible that *Poema Morale* served as a source for *Latemest Day*. According to Brown, the *incipit* of *Doomsday*, ‘wenne hi þwnhe on domes-

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<sup>145</sup> Edition in Carl Horstmann, ‘Die Sprüche des h. Bernhard und die Vision des h. Paulus nach MS. Laud 108’, *Archiv*, 52 (1874), 33-38, at p. 36. On the Middle English versions of the *Visio Pauli*, see Chapter 3.5.

dai ful sore I me adrede’, also parallels *Poema Morale*, v. 6: ‘þan ibiðenche me þar on wel sore ime adrede’.<sup>146</sup> Furthermore, *Doomsday* also echoes some contemporary ‘Soul and Body’ texts, especially in the reference to the fondness for fine clothing and the image of the rider at vv. 14-16:

Monie of þe riche men þat warden fou & gray  
riden uppe steden & uppe palefray  
ha sculen atte dome singen weilaway.<sup>147</sup>  
(Many of the rich men that wore particoloured and grey furs, rode upon  
steeds and palefreys, shall sing ‘alas!’ at the doom).

To these textual connections, the passage on the signs preceding the Final Judgment that concludes *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* must also be added.<sup>148</sup>

Apart from his specific merits as a poet, it is therefore significant that the author of *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day* mostly relied on English material for his compositions: these are two vernacular English lyrics based on a vernacular English tradition. At this stage, the ‘Soul’s Address’ structure seems to have developed to such an extent that it inspired and took inspiration from native analogues. This is the case with the mutual interdependence of the *Worcester Fragments* and several lyrics on death, and it is also true of the dependence of *Latemest Day* on the *Worcester Fragments* and *Poema Morale*.

Another text, known from its modern titles as *Sinners, Beware!* or *The Sayings of St Bede*, bears witness to the mutual influence of English religious poetry and the ‘Soul and Body’ tradition at this stage. *Sinners, Beware* is a poem on the Deadly Sins in six-line stanzas, with a rhyme scheme aabaab – an early attempt

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<sup>146</sup> Brown, p. 188.

<sup>147</sup> Brown, p. 43.

<sup>148</sup> See Chapter 3.7. See also Siebert, pp. 154-57.

at the tail-rhyme stanza in English.<sup>149</sup> Notably, this poem only survives in two of the manuscripts that also preserve *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day*: MS Jesus College 29, fols 248<sup>r</sup>-251<sup>v</sup> (where it follows *Poema Morale*) and MS Digby 86, fols 127<sup>v</sup>-130<sup>r</sup>.<sup>150</sup> *Sinners, Beware* heavily draws upon the traditional themes of repentance; from the condemnation of greediness (amongst both clergy and laymen) to the accusation towards proud knights; from the food-for-worms motif to the image of the neglectful friends. The poem also features the motif of the indescribable pains of hell<sup>151</sup> (noted above in *Poema Morale*, and *Latemest Day*, as well as in the verse *Visio Pauli* of MS Laud Misc. 108) and reflects the ‘accumulation of death themes’ in several instances such as the burial and grave imagery;<sup>152</sup> it is aptly concluded by the vision of the Last Judgment. After the Last Judgment of the wicked, the damned soul and its body are conducted to hell by the devils; the soul then curses its body (vv. 331-336):<sup>153</sup>

Pe saule seiþ to þe lichome.

Acursed wurþe þi nome.

Þin heaued and þin heorte.

Ðu vs hauest iwroht þes schome.

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<sup>149</sup> George Saintsbury, *A History of English Prosody From the Twelfth Century to the Present Day. Vol. I: From the Origins to Spenser* (London: Macmillan, 1906), p. 55: ‘Here is probably the first attempt to imitate (from Provencal or from Latin?) a measure producing the famous, and for some seven centuries never forgotten, romance stanza, of six lines rhymed aabaab. The foot arrangement is, as we should expect, less advanced’.

<sup>150</sup> The MS Jesus College 29 version, incipit *Peos holy gostes myhte*, is printed in Morris, ‘An Old English Miscellany’, pp. 72-83. The MS Digby 86 version, incipit *Holi gost, þi miȝtte*, is printed in Frederick J. Furnivall, ed., *The Minor Poems of the Vernon MS, Part 2*, EETS, OS 117 (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner, 1901), pp. 765-76.

<sup>151</sup> See Tuck, p. 102.

<sup>152</sup> See Van Os, pp. 143-45; Tuck, pp. 170-71, 187.

<sup>153</sup> This passage is discussed by Tuck, pp. 100-04.

And alle þene eche grome.

Vs schal euer smerte.<sup>154</sup>

(The soul says to the body: Cursed be your name, your head and your heart!

You caused disgrace to us, and we shall suffer forever all the eternal punishments!)

Notably, the corresponding passage in MS Digby 86, vv. 343-348, is somewhat different from MS Jesus College 29:

Pe soule seyþ to onsuare,

“Licom, al þou forfare

So wrechede and so ounlede,

Wor þou ous hauest .I.-wrouþ þis fare,

And .I.-brout ous ewche kare

þat euere we shulen þolie”.<sup>155</sup>

(The soul answered: “Body, you, so wretched and wicked, have ruined everything, because you have caused us this misfortune and brought sorrow to us both that we shall forever endure”).

The brevity of the passage and the difference between the two versions suggests that the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ was only sketched in this poem; furthermore, the lack of rhyme between verse 345 and verse 348 of the Digby version indicates corruption.<sup>156</sup> The brief ‘Soul’s Address’ in *Sinners, Beware* is significant for the continuing association between the ‘Soul and Body’ theme and eschatological visions: the soul rebukes its body after the Final Judgment and after it has been conducted to Hell. This unique setting can be easily explained by the fact that, in the context of *Þeos holy gostes myhte*, the ‘Soul and Body’

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<sup>154</sup> Morris, p. 83.

<sup>155</sup> Furnivall, pp. 775-76.

<sup>156</sup> As suggested to me by Professor Bella Millett (pers. comm., 2018), perhaps the original reading was not *þolie* but *grede*, which would restore rhyme.

theme is treated *as one* of the ‘death themes’ discussed in this chapter, rather than being the focus of the poem as in the *Worcester Fragments* and *Latemest Day*.

## 2.5. THE SHORT POEMS IN CAMBRIDGE, TRINITY COLLEGE, MS B.14.39

Even if they were probably not directly influenced by the *Worcester Fragments*, Heningham’s definition of ‘condensed version’ could conceivably fit two lyrics preserved in MS Trinity College B.14.39: *Nou is mon hol & soint*, fol. 27<sup>r</sup>, titled *Shroud and Grave* by modern scholars,<sup>157</sup> and *Nu þu vnselel bodi up-on bere list*, fol. 84<sup>r</sup>, first published by Brown under the title *Over the Bier of the Worldling*.<sup>158</sup>

Trinity College B.14.39 is a thirteenth-century miscellany containing works in Latin, French and English, both in verse and in prose, religious and secular.<sup>159</sup> This manuscript can be considered the largest extant collection of ‘Soul and Body’ works: not only does it preserve the two above-mentioned lyrics, but also one of the four versions of *Latemest Day* and *Doomsday*, as well as one of the three versions of the debate poem *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* (which will be discussed in the next chapter). To these texts must be added a number of lyrics on the grave (such as *When the Turf is Thy Tower*) and exhortatory notes of a

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<sup>157</sup> Editions in Brown, p. 31; Reichl, pp. 310-11; Conlee, pp. 7-9.

<sup>158</sup> Edition in Brown, p. 64; Reichl, p. 492.

<sup>159</sup> See Siebert, p. 136. For a description of the manuscript, see Montague Rhodes James, *The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. A Descriptive Catalogue*, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900-1904), I, pp. 438-449. A digital edition of the manuscript is available on Master and Fellows of Trinity College, Cambridge, *The James Catalogue of Western Manuscripts* (Cambridge: Trinity College Library, 2013-2017), <<http://trinity-sites-pub.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?index=1708>>, last accessed October 2018. An edition of the poems in the manuscript is in Reichl (1973).

similar genre (*Health of the Body and the Soul*, fol. 42<sup>v160</sup>). It is therefore clear that the manuscript's compiler was concerned with themes of death and repentance, as the two short poem here discussed show.

*Shroud and Grave* is a short poem in rhyming couplets; there are some 'uncertainties about the poem as we have it in the manuscript, particularly in its final verses',<sup>161</sup> because the trimming of the leaf resulted in the loss of some lines' endings.<sup>162</sup> This text has been regarded as a possible fragment of a longer poem,<sup>163</sup> even if it appears sound in its content as it stands.<sup>164</sup> I quote the full text from Conlee's edition:

Nou is mon hol & soint  
& huvel him comit in mund;  
Penne me seint aftir þe prest  
Pat wel con reden him to Crist.  
Aftair þe prest boit icomin  
Þe feirliche deit him huit inomyn;  
Me priket him in on vul clohit  
& legget him by þe wout.  
A-moruen boþin sout & norit

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<sup>160</sup> Editions in Henry A. Person, ed., *Cambridge Middle English Lyrics* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1953), p. 26; Reichl, p. 405: 'Liuis first ant licames hele, | þine sunnes heir to beten | Ant þine soule to saluien, | þine children to consailen | Ant þine frent to gladien; | To heowene Crist þe sende | þer blisse is bouten hende. | God turneþe to þen ilke þinke | þat þe is best to lif ant to soule', "Heal first life and body, in order to atone here for your sins and save your soul, to teach your children, and to gladden your friends. May Christ send you to Heaven, where there is endless bliss. May God direct you towards whatever is best for your life and soul".

<sup>161</sup> Conlee, p. 7.

<sup>162</sup> See Brown, p. 180.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Conlee, p. 7.

<sup>164</sup> See Siebert, p. 140.

Me nimit þat bodi & berrit hit forit;  
 Me grauit him put oþer ston,  
 Þer-in me leit þe fukul bon.  
 Þenne sait þe soule to þe licam:  
 “Wey, þat ic ever in þe com!  
 Þu noldes friday festen to non,  
 Ne þe setterday almesse don,  
 Ne þen sonneday gon to churche,  
 Ne cristene verkis wrche.  
 Neir þu never so prud  
 Of hude & of hewe ikud,  
 Þu salt in horþe wonien  
 & wormes þe to-cheuen  
 & of alle ben lot  
 Þat her þe vere y-lewe”.<sup>165</sup>

(Now the man is in good health, and then evil comes into his mind; then a priest, who can guide him towards Christ, is sent to him. After the priest has come, sudden death has seized him; he is wrapped in a shroud and laid in a crypt. In the morning, both south and north, the body is taken and carried forth; a pit or a grave is dug, the transient corpse is laid therein. Then the soul says to the body: Alas, that I ever came within you! You did not want to fast on Friday until noon, or to give alms on Saturday, or go to church on Sunday, or perform Christian works. However proud you were of your famous appearance and complexion, you shall now dwell in earth and worms will chew you, and you will be loathsome to all who were dear to you here).

The text can be easily divided in two sections: vv. 1-12 depicts the death and the burial of a man; vv. 13-24 contain the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’. The first

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<sup>165</sup> Conlee, pp. 8-9.



section, with its marked impersonality and its universal tone, echoes similar reflections on death and burial found in lyrics like *The Grave* or *Proprietates Mortis*. Even the second section apparently looks more detached than the usual ‘Soul’s Address’ texts: the Soul emphasises the sin of omission by means of a simple, though effective, day-by-day list. Nonetheless, some elements of *Shroud and Grave* find parallels in the contemporary and previous production: vv. 1-6 refer to the theme of the unpredictability of death which is found, for example, in the *Augustini Sermo*; the initial complaint of the soul, v. 14, is a ‘Soul and Body’ commonplace and, as noted by Brown,<sup>166</sup> it is particularly close to the *Worcester Fragments*, v. F 4; v. 18, with its reference to the body’s pride, also resembles the ‘modinesse’ of the Worcester poem. Pride is also one of the chief sins stigmatised in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nytt*, as well as the reference to the body’s vanity.<sup>167</sup> The role of the Church as a means to save the soul is also a notable aspect of the debate poems, as well as the only *trait d’union* between the two sections of *Shroud and Grave*, with the visit of the priest in the first part and the day-to-day list in the second part.

The last verses of *Shroud and Grave*, dealing with the disgust of the body’s friends and the food-for-worms theme, are perhaps the closest to the poem’s ‘native predecessors’,<sup>168</sup> such as *De Sancto Andrea* (‘iuele wurmes mote þe chewe’) and to the *Worcester Fragments* especially. For reasons of rhyme, the last four lines should perhaps be considered as two verses. They are printed as two long lines by Brown and Woolf discusses them as a couplet:<sup>169</sup> ‘þu salt in horþe wonien & wormes þe to-cheuen | & of alle ben lot þat her þe vere y-lewe’.

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<sup>166</sup> Brown, p. 180.

<sup>167</sup> See Chapter 3.5.

<sup>168</sup> Woolf, p. 93.

<sup>169</sup> Brown, p 31; Woolf, p. 93.

That would make the last verses significantly longer than the previous ones and, perhaps, this could also be a clue to the influence, or even the interpolation of another text in this lyric.

*Nu þu vnseli bodi up-on bere list* is a nine-line mono-rhyme poem.<sup>170</sup> This short lyric, an address to the body on a bier, is a free adaptation of four Latin lines that precede it in the manuscript. I quote the English text from Brown:

Nu þu vnseli bodi up-on bere list  
Were bet þine robin of fau & of gris?  
Suic day hauit i-comin þu changedest hem þris,  
Þad makiit þe Heuin herþe þad þu on list,  
Þad rotihin sal so dot þe lef þad honkit on þe ris.  
Þu ete þine mete y-makit in counsis,  
Þu lettis þe pore stondin þrute in forist & in is,  
Þu noldist not þe bi-þenchen forte ben wis,  
For-þi hauistu for-lorin þe Ioye of parais.<sup>171</sup>

(Now you, wretched body, lie on the bier. Where are your coloured robes of fur? There have been days when you changed them thrice, to make a Heaven of the earth that you lie on, you who shall rot as the leaf hanging on the branch does. You ate your meat prepared in caldrons; you let the poor stand outside in frost and ice. You did not want to reflect, in order to be wise: therefore you have lost the joy of paradise).

*Over the Bier of the Worldling* was substantially overlooked by scholars, with the notable exceptions of Woolf's and Siebert's analyses, which both discuss the possible connection between this lyric and the 'Soul and Body' literature. The poem has an abrupt start and does not display any kind of introduction or frame:

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<sup>170</sup> Brown, p. 195, notes that the mono-rhyming form is very infrequent in Middle English poetry, 'though well represented in French'.

<sup>171</sup> Brown, p. 64.

it even lacks any internal evidence that a soul is speaking. This is the same problem we have seen in the case of *The Grave*; these nine lines are very close in tone and content to the ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition: ‘indeed it is only from knowledge of other Body and Soul poems that we can with certainty infer that it is a reproach spoken by the soul’.<sup>172</sup> However, as Siebert argues, the last line could suggest that, rather than a soul, another speaker is doing the accusation:

While the accusations against the body in “Over the Bier of the Worldling” do resemble those in body and soul poems, it may be dangerous to assume that the soul is the speaker: “The Grave” is addressed to a body and contains no motif that cannot be found in body and soul poems, but its depersonalized, universal tone and its lack of an overt didactic purpose suggest that the speaker is not the soul. Here, however, the identification seems more promising; the motifs, accusatory tone and moral thrust are all in accord with the body and soul tradition. The only hint that the speaker might not be the soul is the last line. The speaker says that the body has lost the joy of paradise through its bad behavior. In the body and soul poems, the soul accuses the body of having damned *the soul*. Although it may point out that the body will join it in hell, the soul always displays particular bitterness about its own fate. Still, “Over the Bier of the Worldling,” whether it is a soul’s address or not, is closely allied to the body and soul works.<sup>173</sup>

The depiction of the sinner is interesting and finds some promising analogues especially in the ‘Soul and Body’ debates, where fondness for fine clothing is often remarked in an *ubi sunt* context, as noted by Siebert (a very close parallel is in *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*).<sup>174</sup> References to gluttony and to the refusal to

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<sup>172</sup> Woolf, p. 93.

<sup>173</sup> Siebert, 143-44.

<sup>174</sup> See Siebert, pp. 145-48.

shelter the poor are well recorded from the *Worcester Fragments* onwards, as discussed above; the lack of pondering is an accusation even more rooted in the ‘Soul and Body’ tradition, dating back to the Vercelli-Exeter poem. The only unique feature of *Over the Bier of the Worldling* is the parallel between the body and the leaf at v. 5, notable because of the relative scarcity of similitudes and metaphors in the ‘Soul and Body’ tradition (an exception is the hedgehog of the *Worcester Fragments*, discussed above).

What I think has so far escaped critical attention is the relationship between the English text and the Latin lines that it adapts.<sup>175</sup> The incipit of this Latin piece begins ‘Purpura cum bisso dignum te fecit abisso’. This line also opens an epigram in London, British Library, MS Harley 956, fol. 26<sup>r</sup>, beginning of the thirteenth century, printed in Dinkova-Bruun’s critical edition of the Latin Poetic Anthology preserved in this manuscript.<sup>176</sup> To my knowledge, it has not been hitherto noted that the four-line poem in Trinity College B.14.39 corresponds to items 49-50 of the Latin anthology in Harley 956. The two pieces in Harley 956 are additions to the original collection, both written by the same hand in the right margin of the folio.<sup>177</sup> The first epigram deals with *paupertas* and is titled *De diuite et Lazaro* both in Walther’s *Initia*<sup>178</sup> and in Dinkova-Bruun’s edition; the

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<sup>175</sup> Brown did not include the Latin lines in his book, but they were printed by Reichl, p. 492.

<sup>176</sup> Greti Dinkova-Bruun, ‘Notes on Poetic Composition in the Theological Schools ca. 1200 and the Latin Poetic Anthology from Ms. Harley 956: A Critical Edition’, *Sacris Erudiri* 43 (2004), 299-391, at p. 333. For the manuscript date, see p. 299.

<sup>177</sup> Dinkova-Bruun, 301. I discuss the tradition of this Latin poem in my forthcoming article ‘The Latin Short Poem *Purpura cum bisso*’, *Notes and Queries* (2018).

<sup>178</sup> Hans Walther, *Initia Carminum ac Versuum Medii Aevi Posterioris Latinorum* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1959), 14941. Walther quotes two manuscript entries for *Purpura cum bisso*, both later than those in Trinity College B.14.39 and Harley 956: Munich, Bayerische

second epigram, unnoted in Walther, concerns the sin of *avaritia*.<sup>179</sup> In the MS Trinity College B.14.39 version, the two epigrams are treated as a single, four-verse piece with leonine rhyme:

*Purpura cum bisso dignum te fecit abyssio*

*Et penis gravibus. Splendidit ille cibus*

*Et quia de pleno nil largitur egeno*

*Qua tua lingua perit pena perhennis erit.*<sup>180</sup>

(Purple with linen made you worthy of the abyss and of severe torments.

He was sumptuous in food and, because of repletion, he gives nothing to the poor. For this reason your tongue dies, there will be eternal torment).

There is also an interesting textual parallel between this Latin poem, v. 1 ('*purpura cum bisso*') and the Latin 'Soul and Body' *Royal Debate*, v. 272 ('*bissus atque purpura*').<sup>181</sup> It is also worth remembering that, according to Batiouchkof, the Parable of the Dives and poor Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31) may have provided the theme of the difference in the way in which a rich and a poor

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Staatsbibliothek, MS Clm 16028, fol. 127 (4 v.), fourteenth century, and a fifteenth-century addition to Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 53, fol. 1<sup>v</sup>.

<sup>179</sup> Dinkova-Bruun, 308.

<sup>180</sup> *The James Catalogue of Western Manuscripts*, <<http://trin-sites-pub.trin.cam.ac.uk/james/viewpage.php?index=1708>>, last accessed October 2018. As suggested to me by Dr Dinkova-Bruun (pers. comm., 2016), *nil* makes the line unmetrical, and it should be emended to *n(ih)il*. Apart from the edition in Reichl, p. 492, a transcription of the Trinity College B.14.39 version of the Latin poem is available in Margaret Laing, ed., *A Linguistic Atlas of Early Middle English, 1150-1325* (Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh, 2013, Version 3.2), <[http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laeme2/tagged\\_data/tr323at.html](http://www.lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laeme2/tagged_data/tr323at.html)>, last accessed October 2018. I am most thankful to Dr Margaret Laing (University of Edinburgh) for her help in translating this poem and to Dr Greti Dinkova-Bruun (University of Toronto) for commenting on an earlier draft of this section.

<sup>181</sup> Eleanor Kellogg Heningham, *An Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul preserved in MS Royal 7 A III in the British Museum* (Doctoral thesis, New York University, 1937), p. 114.

man die, which was conflated with the representation of the deaths of the righteous and the wicked in the Mediterranean ‘Soul and Body’ legend.<sup>182</sup>

These considerations allow us to draw some conclusions. A Latin poem dealing with the futility of the worldly goods, incipit ‘Purpura cum bisso’, is preserved in two manuscripts of the thirteenth century, Harley 956 and Trinity College B.14.39. In this latter manuscript, this Latin piece has been loosely adapted into a nine-line mono-rhyme vernacular lyric, *Nu þu vnsemi bodi up-on bere list*. The ‘translator’ has reused the sin-related elements of its Latin source (gluttony, love for fine clothes, and refusal to sheltering the poor) and reworked them by adopting the tone and the motifs of a subgenre popular at the time, that of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’. The motifs include the deathbed setting (v.1), the *ubi sunt* question (v. 2), the decomposition theme (v. 5), and the lack of reflections (v. 8). To sum up, the vernacular composer adapted a short Latin poem on penance into an English lyric influenced by the ‘Soul and Body’ subgenre. This also explains why *Nu þu vnsemi bodi up-on bere list* is similar to many ‘Soul and Body’ texts without having any exact textual parallel in any of them.

## 2.6. CONCLUSIONS

The works examined in this chapter prove that, in the Early Middle English phase, the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ has become an established subgenre with well-defined characteristics. Shared features like the preparation of the burial, the ‘Signs of Death’, the smallness of the grave, and the representation of a sinner belonging to a high social class all make this body of texts much more homogenous than the previous Old English tradition.

Most importantly, rather than being a topos inserted in a broader context (as in the Old English homilies), the Early Middle English ‘Soul’s Address’ has been

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<sup>182</sup> See Batiouchkof, pp. 53, 532-33. See also Introduction, I.7.

developed into a structured and flexible literary device: ‘structured’ because of the recurrence of the treatment of similar motifs; ‘flexible’, as defined by Woolf,<sup>183</sup> because of its adaptability and inclusivity. The shift from the Old English to the Early Middle English tradition is well exemplified by the unique combination of earlier and contemporary motifs found in *De Sancto Andrea*.

Around the thirteenth century, the theme of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ was popular enough not only to be influenced by, but also to exert an influence on, other vernacular works. Of the texts discussed in this chapter, one has been traditionally seen as depending on another (*Latemest Day* on the *Worcester Fragments*); the *Worcester Fragments* themselves have also probably inspired other lyrical treatments of death and burial; *Nu þu vnseli bodi up-on bere list* adapted a Latin source in accordance with the motifs of the vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ subgenre; and the poet of *Sinners, Beware* included a brief ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ in the concluding vision of the Judgment Day.

In the same period, a ‘new wave’ of English adaptations of Latin material lies beneath the earliest attestation of the debates between the Body and the Soul, in a continuous ‘dialogue’ between the Latin and the English vernacular tradition, and within the English tradition in itself. Two different tendencies coexist within the ‘Soul and Body’ literature of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries:

1. The development, discussed above, of the ‘Soul’s Address’ structure, which partly relies on the previous homiletic tradition and has also been enriched by new topical motifs;
2. The emergence of the debate structure, largely dependent on Latin debate poems on the same theme.

The ‘Soul’s Address’ texts are recorded no later than the end of the thirteenth

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<sup>183</sup> Woolf, p. 93.

century. This structure was abandoned thereafter; the vernacular debate poems, which will be analysed in the next chapter, were composed and copied between the thirteenth and the fifteenth centuries. It would be tempting to posit another ‘shift’, from the address to the debate form, but it must be pointed out that the two structures not only occur at the same time, but also in the same manuscripts (as in the cases of Trinity College B.14.39 and Digby 86).

Thus, in the thirteenth century, the two structures – that of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ and that of the debate between the Body and the Soul – overlap: the former reaches its highest point and then suddenly disappears, and the latter emerges from the Latin tradition. The issues regarding the tradition of the debates of the Soul and the Body will be discussed in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER 3. MIDDLE ENGLISH DEBATES OF THE BODY AND THE SOUL

A study of the three surviving Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ debate poems requires careful consideration of some key points. What kinds of relationship exist between the existing vernacular works composed in Middle English and Anglo-Norman and their supposed Latin sources? Could the previous ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition have influenced the debate poetry? Can both the vernacular and the Latin poems be situated in the context of the emerging universities and the twelfth-century development of Aristotelian logic? In order to try to answer all of these questions, I shall now briefly focus on the roots of medieval debate poetry. I shall then analyse the Latin debate poems related to the ‘Soul and Body’ theme (the *Royal Debate* and the *Visio Philiberti*), the Anglo-Norman tradition deriving from these Latin poems, and finally the three Middle English poems usually considered as depending on the above-mentioned Latin works: *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*,<sup>1</sup> *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*,<sup>2</sup> and the *Porkington Debate*.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Editions in Thomas Wright, ed., *The Latin Poems Commonly Attributed to Walter Mapes* (London: Camden Society, 1841), pp. 334-346; John W. Conlee, ed., *Middle English Debate Poetry: A Critical Anthology* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991), pp. 18-49.

<sup>2</sup> Editions in Wright, pp. 346-359; Karl Reichl, ed., *Religiöse Dichtung im englischen Hochmittelalter. Untersuchung und Edition der Handschrift B. 14. 39 des Trinity College in Cambridge*, Münchener Universitäts-schriften, Philosophische Fakultät, Texte und Untersuchungen zur Englischen Philologie, 1 (München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1973), pp. 339-65; Conlee, pp. 10-17.

<sup>3</sup> Edition in James Orchard Halliwell, ed., *Early English Miscellanies in Prose and Verse* (London: Warton Club, 1855), pp. 12-39.

### 3.1. MEDIEVAL DEBATES AND THE *DISPUTATIO*

Although medieval debate poetry is often seen as a distinctive product of the period from the twelfth to the fifteenth century, its origins are much earlier. As stated in the Introduction, I.4, Syriac literature developed a remarkable tradition of verse disputes, among which four debates between soul and body are currently known.<sup>4</sup> Notably, Syriac poems have a similar pattern in common with medieval debate poems (the two contenders speak in alternate stanzas and a third judge states who the winner is). Syriac ‘Soul and Body’ disputes are also based on the same point of contention as medieval treatments of the theme: the responsibility for sins.<sup>5</sup> The possibility of an uninterrupted line of development from Syriac literature to medieval Latinity, through the medium of Muslim Spain,<sup>6</sup> surely needs further investigation.

However, the earliest examples of Latin debate poetry date back to the Carolingian Renaissance and are usually considered to show a marked Virgilian influence.<sup>7</sup> In particular, the first known Latin debate poem is the

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<sup>4</sup> See Sebastian P. Brock, ‘The Dispute between Soul and Body: An Example of a Long-Lived Mesopotamian Literary Genre’, *Aram*, 1 (1989), 53-64. See also Introduction, I.4.

<sup>5</sup> See Brock, pp. 53-57.

<sup>6</sup> For an overview, see Silvestro Fiore, ‘La tenson en Espagne et en Babylonie: évolution ou polygénèse?’, in *Proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the International Comparative Literature Association, Fribourg, 1964*, ed. by François Jost (The Hague: Mouton, 1966), pp. 982-92; Brock, p. 64; Enrique Jiménez, *The Babylonian Disputation Poems. With Editions of the Series of the Poplar, Palm and Vine, the Series of the Spider, and the Story of the Poor, Forlorn Wren*, *Culture and History of the Ancient Near East*, 87 (Leiden: Brill, 2017), pp. 148-53.

<sup>7</sup> On the earliest Latin debate poems, see Conlee, pp. xiii-xv; Thomas L. Reed Jr., *Middle English Debate Poetry and the Aesthetics of Irresolution* (Columbia, MO, and London: University of Missouri Press, 1990), pp. 105-25.

eight-century *Conflictus Veris et Hiemis*,<sup>8</sup> a disputation between winter and spring traditionally ascribed to Alcuin.<sup>9</sup> Since there are obvious connections between debate poems and rhetoric, it is significant that Alcuin can also be considered to be the ‘first English rhetorician’,<sup>10</sup> being the author of the philosophical dialogue *Disputatio de rhetorica et de virtutibus*. Another work by Alcuin, *De dialectica*, had an immense influence on the teaching of logic between the ninth and the eleventh centuries.<sup>11</sup> Moreover, through Alcuin’s pupil Rabanus Maurus ‘and through Haimon of Halberstadt, his colleague, the study of logic spread rapidly through Brittany, Gaul and Germany, and the Flanders’, as Abelson puts it, ‘so much so that in the teaching of theology in the schools of the tenth and eleventh centuries logical disputations and theological discussions were often carried on’.<sup>12</sup>

The second known earliest example of Latin debate poetry is the *Rosae Liliique Certamen* by the Irish author Sedulius Scottus, from the middle of the ninth century: a dispute between a rose and a lily.<sup>13</sup> Scottus was also trained in philosophy; his most celebrated work is *De Rectoribus Christianis*, a commentary on Porphyry’s *Εἰσαγωγή* (which is, in turn, an introduction to

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<sup>8</sup> Latin poetical terms for ‘debate’ include *conflictus*, *altercatio*, *contentio*, *dialogus*, and *disputatio*. See Hans Walther, *Das Streitgedicht in der lateinischen Literatur des Mittelalters* (München: Beck, 1920), p. 3; Conlee, p. xii.

<sup>9</sup> Edition and translation in Peter Godman, ed., *Poetry of the Carolingian Renaissance* (London: Duckworth, 1985), pp. 144-50. See also John I. McEnerney, ‘Alcuin, Carmen 58’, *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch*, 16 (1981), 35-42.

<sup>10</sup> James J. Murphy, *Rhetoric in the Middle Ages. A History of the Rhetorical Theory from Saint Augustine to the Renaissance* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), p. 80.

<sup>11</sup> See Paul Abelson, *The Seven Liberal Arts. A Study in Medieval Culture* (New York: Teacher’s College, Columbia University, 1906), pp. 79-80.

<sup>12</sup> Abelson, p. 81.

<sup>13</sup> Edition and translation in Godman, pp. 282-87.

Aristotle's *Logic*). Both the *Conflictus Veris et Hiemis* and the *Rosae Liliique Certamen* show the influence of Virgil's *Eclogues* and of classical pastoral literature in general, with the *prosopopoeia* or personification of the seasons, natural elements, birds and flowers.<sup>14</sup> Another important source for the birth and development of the debates is Prudentius' *Psychomachia* (fourth century), modelled on epic, which provides a battle, along with verbal altercations, between vices and virtues.<sup>15</sup>

As Conlee has shown, the structure of Latin medieval debate poetry became more complex around the eleventh century: two notable innovations were the introduction of the first-person narrator and the dream-vision framework.<sup>16</sup> Vernacular debates shortly followed: 'debate poetry made its initial appearance in English literature around the year 1200 in the *Owl and the Nightingale*, a debut which was followed later in the thirteenth century by the earliest Middle English Body and Soul debates'.<sup>17</sup>

Between the twelfth and the thirteenth century, a number of Latin verse debates between the body and the soul were composed:<sup>18</sup>

1. The *Royal Debate*, also known as *Nuper huiuscemodi uisionem somni*

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<sup>14</sup> See Conlee, pp. xiii-xiv.

<sup>15</sup> See 'Debate Poetry', in Robert T. Lambdin and Laura C. Lambdin, eds, *Encyclopedia of Medieval Literature* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2000), p. 135. On Prudentius and his influence, see Ad Putter, 'Prudentius and the Late Classical Biblical Epics of Juvenius, Proba, Sedulius, Arator, and Avitus', in *Oxford History of Classical Reception in English Literature. Volume 1: 800-1558*, ed. by Rita Copeland (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 351-76, at pp. 367-70.

<sup>16</sup> See Conlee, p. xiv.

<sup>17</sup> Conlee, p. xii. Cartlidge proposes a later-thirteenth-century date for the poem; see Neil Cartlidge, 'The Date of *The Owl and the Nightingale*', *Medium Ævum*, 65 (1996), 230-47.

<sup>18</sup> The main studies of the Latin 'Soul and Body' debates are in Walther, pp. 63-88, and Michel-André Bossy, 'Medieval Debates of Body and Soul', *Comparative Literature*, 28.2 (1976), 144-63.

- (twelfth century);<sup>19</sup>
2. *Streit zwischen Körper und Seele*, incipit *Conpar mea nobilis* (twelfth century);<sup>20</sup>
  3. *Altercacio carnis et spiritus*, incipit *O Caro, cara vilitas* (beginning of the thirteenth century);<sup>21</sup>
  4. *Altercatio animae et corporis*, ascribed to Philip the Chancellor (thirteenth century);<sup>22</sup>
  5. *Cogis me litem describere spiritualem* (beginning of the thirteenth century);<sup>23</sup>
  6. *Visio Philiberti*, also known as *Noctis sub silentio tempori brumali* or simply as *Dialogus inter corpus et animam* (thirteenth century).<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Edition in Eleanor Kellogg Heningham, *An Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul preserved in MS Royal 7 A III in the British Museum* (Doctoral thesis, New York University, 1937). Also cited in Walther, p. 77.

<sup>20</sup> Edition in Walther, pp. 218-20. *Conpar mea nobilis* is significantly different from the Latin poetry analysed in this chapter. The debate is between a living body and its soul (Walther, p. 79: ‘der Streit spielt sich hier noch zu Lebzeiten des Körpers ab’). The soul wants to restrain the body’s sinful desires (especially of sexual nature), telling the body that, if it repents soon, it will be resurrected and enjoy the pleasures of eternal life. At the end of the debate, the body gladly promises to follow the soul’s teaching.

<sup>21</sup> Edition in Walther, pp. 215-16. *O Caro, cara vilitas* is an example of elaborate debate between skilful contenders. The main point of contention is the possibility of enjoying sexual relationships (I shall briefly discuss this poem in Chapter 3.3).

<sup>22</sup> Edition in Guido Maria Dreves, ed., *Analecta Hymnica Medii Aevi*, 55 vols (Leipzig: O.R. Reisland, 1886-1922), XXI, pp. 115-16. Also cited in Walther, p. 76. Similar in tone to the Latin debates analysed in this chapter, the *Altercatio animae et corporis* nevertheless does not share relevant textual parallels with the vernacular debates.

<sup>23</sup> Edition in André Wilmart, ‘Un grand débat de l’âme et du corps en vers élégiaques’, *Studi Medievali, Nuova Serie*, 12 (1939), 192-209. I shall briefly discuss this poem in Chapter 3.3.

<sup>24</sup> Edition in Wright, pp. 95-106.

Two of these debate poems are of particular relevance for the development of the vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ literature: the *Royal Debate* and the *Visio Philiberti* are usually considered to be the immediate sources of the Middle English debates. The *Visio Philiberti*, in turn, is loosely based on the *Royal Debate* itself, albeit radically reworked.<sup>25</sup>

These two Latin poems are early witnesses of debates set in a dream-vision framework.<sup>26</sup> The *Visio Philiberti* is innovative not only for its use of the dream-vision, but also for adopting the first-person narrator: in the *Royal Debate*, by contrast, the vision is seen by a “certain bishop” (‘cuidam pontifici’),<sup>27</sup> but the poem is in the third person. Most importantly, both these texts are roughly contemporary with the emergence of the European universities. In my view, the differences between the *Royal Debate* and the *Visio Philiberti* reflect two different stages of the development of the debate form: while the latter can be put in the context of the new academic dialectical practices that were beginning to emerge in the twelfth century, the *Royal Debate* shows the influence of earlier rhetorical traditions. To clarify the difference between rhetoric and dialectic, I shall briefly introduce the dialectical pattern known as *disputatio*.

In 1128, half a century before the emergence of the universities, a new group of works by Aristotle, known as the ‘New Logic’, became available in

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<sup>25</sup> See Walther, p. 77; Heningham, pp. 68-83. See also Robert W. Ackerman, ‘The Debate of the Body and the Soul and Parochial Christianity’, *Speculum*, 37.4 (Oct. 1962), 541-65, at p. 543; and Alessandra Capozza, ‘Per una nuova edizione della Desputisun De L’Âme Et Du Corps’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Università degli Studi di Macerata, 2011), pp. 7-8. Cartlidge argues that the *Visio Philiberti* is the source of the *Royal Debate*, rather than the other way around: see Neil Cartlidge, ‘In the Silence of a Midwinter Night: A Re-evaluation of the *Visio Philiberti*’, *Medium Aevum*, 75 (2006), 24-45, at p. 40.

<sup>26</sup> See Conlee, p. xv.

<sup>27</sup> Heningham, p. 15

the West: *Analytica priora*, *Analytica posteriora*, *Topica*, and *De sophisticis elenchis*, translated by Jacob of Venice in 1128.<sup>28</sup> These translations exerted a deep influence on the development of the curriculum in cathedral schoolrooms and emerging universities, marking a renewed interest in the art of persuasive speech: ‘by the end of the twelfth century both the *Topica* and *De sophisticis* had become the standard texts for the beginning student in dialectic’.<sup>29</sup> After the increased importance accorded to dialectic, rhetorical studies lost their traditional prominence. For the Aristotelians, rhetoric was subordinate to dialectic. As McKeon writes:

The two general tendencies which came to their culmination in the thirteenth century, that by which rhetoric was made part of logic and that by which rhetoric became an instrument of theology, are determined by the important methodological differences which separate the Aristotelians and the Augustinians.<sup>30</sup>

The main dialectic practice in academia was the *disputatio*, a debate between two (or more) contenders on a given theme. The disputation is based on a fictional case: a contender tries to confute the other contender’s argument by bringing out its intrinsic fallacies – which were used as objections. This practice can be considered ‘one of the most important formal influences in European higher education between about 1150 and 1400’, involving both teachers and pupils: ‘apparently every medieval university student underwent some form of the disputation process [...]. A university teacher of theology,

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<sup>28</sup> See Murphy, p. 104; Hilde De Ridder-Symoens, ed., *A History of the University in Europe. Volume 1: Universities in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), p. 314.

<sup>29</sup> Murphy, p. 102.

<sup>30</sup> Richard McKeon, ‘Rhetoric in the Middle Ages’, *Speculum*, 17.1 (1942), 1-32, at p. 23; cf. De Ridder-Symoens, pp. 315-16.

by definition, was a master at disputation'.<sup>31</sup>

As Novikoff points out, a comprehensive study of the influence of the *disputatio* on the cultural history of the twelfth-thirteenth century still has to be undertaken.<sup>32</sup> Nonetheless, the impact of this didactic practice on literature of the period has been recognized by scholars. In his ground-breaking study on medieval debate poetry, Hans Walther considers classroom disputations to be an important background for the development of the Latin debate poems:

Der fingierte Prozeß, der an den römischen Schulen im rhetorischen und juristischen Unterricht eine große Rolle gespielt hatte, blieb auch im Mittelalter an den Klosterschulen und Universitäten lebendig. Wer in diesen erdichteten Rechtshändeln mit den hochtrabendsten Redensarten prunken, wer den Gegner am gewandtesten durch Trugschlüsse blenden konnte, der blieb Sieger und erntete den lauten Beifall seiner Lehrer und Mitschüler. Solche mündlichen Disputationen fanden ihren Niederschlag in Streitgedichten [...]; sie stehen im Zusammenhange mit den sogenannten Quintilianischen Deklamationen, die im Mittelalter ja bekannt waren. [...] Von dem Dialektikunterricht der Klosterschulen übernahmen die Universitäten des Mittelalters ihre Methode. Den Fragen der Schüler wurden die Antworten des erklärenden Professors gegenübergestellt; daran schloß sich dann eine allgemeine Diskussion in Disputationsform, wobei selbst die krassesten und verfänglichsten Irrtümer als Einwände vorgebracht wurden. [...] Bei der großen allwöchentlich stattfindenden Disputation (*disputatio ordinaria*) erschien die ganze Fakultät in der Aula.<sup>33</sup>

(The imaginary court case, which had played a major role in rhetorical and legal education in the Roman schools, remained alive in monastic

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<sup>31</sup> Murphy, p. 103.

<sup>32</sup> See Alex J Novikoff, *The Medieval Culture of the Disputation. Pedagogy, Practice, and Performance* (Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013), p. 2.

<sup>33</sup> Walther, pp. 21-22. Translations are my own unless otherwise indicated.



schools and universities in the Middle Ages. In these simulated lawsuits, whoever could parade the most magniloquent diction, whoever could dazzle his opponents most skilfully with fallacious arguments, remained the winner and received loud applause of his teachers and fellow students. Such oral disputations were reflected in debate poems [...] they are connected with the so-called *declamations* attributed to Quintilian, which were undoubtedly known in the Middle Ages [...]. The universities of the Middle Ages took their method from the dialectic instruction of the monastic schools. The students' questions were set against the answers of the teacher explaining the topic; there followed a general discussion in the form of a dispute, where even the most obvious and captious errors were put forward as objections. [...] The whole faculty attended the main weekly disputation (*disputatio ordinaria*) in the auditorium).

Walther posits a link (via monastic schools) between the disputations and the ancient Roman rhetorical practices, especially the so-called *declamatio*, which was used for training pupils in forensic orations.<sup>34</sup> In the *declamatio* a pupil had to perform an oration on a given theme (thesis); another pupil had to perform an oration in opposition to the thesis (reply); finally, the master gave the solution and judged the most effective oration. The reply was intended as an alternative solution, and not as a confutation of the first thesis.<sup>35</sup> The practice of a fictional forensic case presumably informed classroom disputations, but teachers adopted a new method, influenced by the recovery of Aristotle, which reflects the subordination of rhetoric to dialectic.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> On declamations and disputations in the classical era, see François Gilbert, '«Declamatio» et «disputatio»', *L'antiquité classique*, 32.2 (1963), 513-40.

<sup>35</sup> See Murphy, pp. 38-39, 40-41.

<sup>36</sup> See Murphy, p. 104: 'the origins of the medieval disputation lie in the twelfth-century interest in dialectic rather than in a survival of Roman influence'.

Twelfth-century teachers were indeed receptive to new texts and methods. The great masters of the first half of the twelfth century could provide innovative skills and knowledge; the importance of a famous master exceeded that of traditional institutions for education, and students travelled to study under him to learn of new texts and techniques.<sup>37</sup> Weijers notes that earlier forms of disputations existed before the emergence of the universities:

It seems that we can distinguish three old traditions: the interpretation of theological texts, the juridical discussion of cases, and the dialectical tradition of inquiry. In all three traditions we find a form of disputation; they came together in the universities during the thirteenth century.<sup>38</sup>

Thirteenth-century universities gradually absorbed and institutionalized teachers, new knowledges, and methods.<sup>39</sup> The disputation, in particular, became a staple of the academic curriculum.<sup>40</sup> The academic *disputatio* was intended as a dialectical process meant to discover the truth, ‘but not just the universal truth that is contained in Scripture. The truth that is the goal of disputation is a pursuit of knowledge valid under the given conditions, an exercise in logic and hermeneutics’.<sup>41</sup> Different kinds of *disputatio* can be identified; furthermore, the practices covered a wide range of topics, from theology to medicine and metaphysics.<sup>42</sup> The *disputatio* had also a rigid and more developed scheme, which was not limited to thesis and a reply, but was

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<sup>37</sup> See Richard W. Southern, ‘The Schools of Paris and the School of Chartres’, in *Renaissance and Renewal in the Twelfth Century*, ed. by Robert L. Benson and Giles Constable (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), pp. 113-37.

<sup>38</sup> Olga Weijers, *In Search of the Truth. A History of Disputation Techniques from Antiquity to Early Modern Times* (Turnhout: Brepols, 2013), p. 97.

<sup>39</sup> On this process, see Southern, pp. 113-37; De Ridder-Symoens, pp. 319-25.

<sup>40</sup> See De Ridder-Symoens, pp. 325-28

<sup>41</sup> Novikoff, p. 136.

<sup>42</sup> See Novikoff, pp. 141-47.

expanded by means of further objections:

A *disputatio* might be defined roughly as a formal discussion of a subject by two or more people, who take opposite or differing sides. The exact format of the encounter might differ from time to time, but the basic process involved the statement of a question, then the offering of a proposition in reply to the question, followed by objections to the proposition. Finally a determination (*determinatio*) of the correct or approved answer would be presented.<sup>43</sup>

According to Murphy, ‘outside the classroom the methodology was translated directly into a pattern for writing’.<sup>44</sup> Novikoff suggests that debate poems like the *Owl and the Nightingale* show clear traces of Aristotle’s logic and dialectical disputations,<sup>45</sup> though Cartlidge argues that this possible influence must not be overestimated.<sup>46</sup> It is worth asking whether works like the *Royal Debate* and the *Visio Philiberti* can be seen as a product of the development of the New Logic and the emergence of academia, and whether the debate scheme can resemble the structure of the *disputatio*. As I shall discuss below, the *Royal Debate* still retains an earlier and not fully developed structure, more dependent on forensic exercises, whereas the *Visio Philiberti* shows a closer adherence to the dialectical practice of disputations, with confutations and objections. The difference between the two poems ultimately reflects some of the differences between rhetoric and dialectic listed by Boethius: ‘dialectic

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<sup>43</sup> Murphy, p. 102. See also Reed, pp. 46-47.

<sup>44</sup> Murphy, p. 103.

<sup>45</sup> Novikoff, pp. 124-32. See also Douglas L. Peterson, ‘The Owl and the Nightingale and Christian Dialectic’, *JEGP*, 55.1 (1956), 13-26. On the relationship between academic disputations and debate poems, see also Reed, pp. 43-65. Reed’s study extensively discusses *The Owl and the Nightingale*; see especially pp. 219-60.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Neil Cartlidge, ed., *The Owl and the Nightingale. Text and Translation* (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2001), pp. xx-xxi.

proceeds by question and answer, rhetoric by continuous speech [...]; the aim of dialectic is to convince an adversary, the aim of rhetoric is to persuade a public and a judge, especially in a juridical context'.<sup>47</sup>

### 3.2. THE *ROYAL DEBATE*

The *Royal Debate* is a Latin poem in trochaic lines of seven syllables rhyming in couplets, preserved in a single manuscript (London, British Library, MS Royal 7 A III, fols 123<sup>r</sup>-144<sup>v</sup>).<sup>48</sup> In her critical edition of the poem, Heningham argues that it must have been composed in the twelfth century,<sup>49</sup> and that 'MS Royal 7 A III had by the early thirteenth century found a home in the north of England. Indeed it is probable that the whole book was compiled in England'.<sup>50</sup> This poem displays a primitive and basic structure of debate between the Body and the Soul, consisting of three long speeches. For the first time in the history of the 'Soul and Body' poetry, the body is allowed a reply.<sup>51</sup> According to Heningham (whose study remains the only comprehensive treatment of the poem),<sup>52</sup> this basic structure largely goes back to the previous

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<sup>47</sup> Weijers, pp. 115-16.

<sup>48</sup> Heningham, p. 13.

<sup>49</sup> Heningham, pp. 7-13.

<sup>50</sup> Heningham, p. 4.

<sup>51</sup> The very first Latin work with a sort of debate between a body and a soul may actually be in Hildebert of Lavardin's *Liber de querimonia et conflictu carnis et spiritus seu animae*, a consolatory *prosimetrum* in the style of Boethius. See Walther, p. 75; Bridget Kennedy Balint, 'Hildebert of Lavardin's "Liber de querimonia" in its Cultural Context' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Harvard University, 2002); Masha Raskolnikov, *Body Against Soul: Gender and Sowlehele in Middle English Allegory* (Columbus, OH: The Ohio State University Press, 2009), pp. 57-60.

<sup>52</sup> Notable contributions are also in Mary Heyward Ferguson, 'The Debate between the Body and the Soul. A Study in the Relationship between Form and Content' (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 1965), pp. 21-50 (an edition and translation of the poem is at pp.

‘Soul’s Address’ tradition, of which it would be the most immediate development. This basic scheme is also found in the ‘Soul and Body’ Irish homily preserved in the *Leabhar Breac* (number XXXVI in Atkinson’s edition).<sup>53</sup> As noted by Heningham, the *Royal Debate* displays a rich and various catalogue of quotations from both classical and Christian literature.<sup>54</sup>

The first speech of the poem is performed by the soul: a long act of accusation that features the traditional arguments of the ‘Soul’s Address’,

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96-145); Justin J. Brent, ‘The Legend of Soul and Body in Medieval England’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, State University of New York, 2000), pp. 143-68; Id., ‘From Address to Debate: Generic Considerations in the *Debate between Soul and Body*’, *Comitatus: A Journal Of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 32.1 (2001), 1-18.

<sup>53</sup> Edition in Robert Atkinson, ed., *The Passions and Homilies from Leabhar Breac* (Dublin: Royal Irish Academy, 1887), pp. 266-73, 507-14. The relationship between this homily and the English and Latin ‘Soul and Body’ literature is a vexed issue. Heningham, p. 42, considers this homily ‘the closest prototype of the *Royal Debate*’, but a direct relationship can hardly be claimed. On the one hand, the homily and the poem share a similar setting and some common features (like the *ubi sunt* motif); on the other hand, the Irish text seems to belong to a somewhat different tradition. For example, the role of the devils is expanded, and the damned soul and the body curse each other with a list of insults, rather than delivering two articulate speeches. It is worth noting that the homily is based on a lost Latin source. Some Latin clauses (omitted by Atkinson in his edition) have been embedded in the Irish text by the homilist. For a list of the Latin clauses and a study of this homily in the context of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature, see Louise Dudley, *The Egyptian Elements in the Legend of the Body and Soul*, Bryn Mawr Monographs, 8 (Baltimore, MD: J.H. Furst, 1911), pp. 128-44. On this homily and the Irish ‘Soul and Body’ tradition, see Helen Fulton, ‘Body and Soul: from Doctrine to Debate in medieval Welsh and Irish Literature’, in *Sanctity as Literature in late medieval Britain*, ed. by Eva Von Contzen and Anke Bernau (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2015), pp. 96-115.

<sup>54</sup> Francis Lee Utley’s review of Heningham’s book provides further quotations: see Francis Lee Utley, Review of Eleanor Kellogg Heningham, *An Early Latin Debate of the Body and Soul preserved in MS Royal 7 A III in the British Museum*, *Modern Language Quarterly*, 2.3 (1941), 503-05.

including an *ubi sunt* passage, the food-for-worms theme and the vision of the final Judgement. In one of the very few studies devoted to the *Royal Debate*, Brent notes that these three elements show a clear echo of the previous ‘Soul and Body’ homiletic material.<sup>55</sup> The very setting that frames the debate (a Saturday night before Sunday, vv. 5-6: ‘noctis circa medium | subsequentis sabbatum’) recalls the Sunday respite of the damned of the *Redactions* of the *Visio Pauli*,<sup>56</sup> the attribution of the vision to a “certain high priest” (‘cuidam pontifici’, v. 3) takes us back to even earlier sources, to the “certain holy man” of the Old English *Macarius Homily*. Moreover, in the final section of the poem, where the soul is carried back to hell by demons, the *Royal Debate* poet ‘endeavoured to mimic the exemplars from the address tradition’:<sup>57</sup> the *Nonantola Version* is a clear example of this traditional conclusion.<sup>58</sup> This aspect is perhaps the most evident point of connection between the previous Latin treatments and the Latin debate tradition. Of all the Latin ‘Soul and Body’ debates, only the *Royal Debate* and the *Visio Philiberti* feature the concluding vision of hell: notably, these two debates are the ones that were adapted in Middle English literature.

Other aspects, such as the *ubi sunt* and the food-for-worms motifs, show an evolution from the previous ‘Soul’s Address’ model. The *ubi sunt* passage of the *Royal Debate* is less general and abstract than the earlier examples: it paints the picture of a specific sinner who spent his whole life stockpiling

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<sup>55</sup> See Brent, ‘From Address to Debate’, pp. 4-5.

<sup>56</sup> See Introduction, I.6, and Chapter 1.1. See also Brent, p. 4, and Rudolph Willard, ‘The Address of the Soul to the Body’, *PMLA*, 50.4 (1935), 957-83.

<sup>57</sup> Brent, p. 6.

<sup>58</sup> Edition in Theodor Batiouchkof, ‘Le Débat de l’Ame et du Corps’, *Romania*, 20 (1891), 1-55, 513-78, at pp. 576-78.

goods,<sup>59</sup> which were never enough for him (vv. 241-272):

Ubi multifaria  
tua nunc eraria,  
Gemmae, torques, anuli,  
pleni nummis sacculi?  
Ubi nunc argentea  
vasa tam idonea,  
Ciphi, coclearia,  
catini, salaria?  
Ubi mutatoria  
vestia tam varia,  
Ubi tam sollicita  
famulantum agmina?  
Ubi leporarii,  
ubi nunc dextrarii,  
Plena equis stabula,  
molosi, venabula?  
Nisi et ancipitres  
ubi nunc et aucupes  
Silve, saltus nemorum,  
caule, greges pecorum?  
Molendina, orrea,  
pistrina, vivaria,  
Coquine cellaria,  
plena promptuaria,  
Ubi nunc innumera  
tellus segetifera  
Vinearum iugera  
orti et pomeria?

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<sup>59</sup> See Brent, pp. 7-9.

Ubi arma fulgida,  
pigmentata pocula,  
Epularum genera,  
byssus, atque purpura?<sup>60</sup>

(Where are now your various treasures, gems, necklaces, rings, and sacks full of coins? Where are your silver vessels so fit for purpose; bowls, spoons, basins, salt-cellars? Where are your changes of clothes so various, where are your assiduous troops of servants? Where the greyhounds, where are now the steeds, the stables full of horses, hounds and hunting-spears? Where are now the sparrow-hawks and hawks, and bird-traps, woods and mountain pastures, sheepfolds and flock of sheep? Mills, storehouses, bakeries, enclosures, kitchen larders, full storerooms; where are now the countless plots of land with corn, your acres of vineyards, orchards of vegetables and fruit? Where are the shining weapons, the pigmented cups, the various kinds of banquets, silk and purple?)

This section reflects the increasing expansion of the *ubi sunt* passages of the later ‘Soul’s Address’ poems, such as the *Worcester Fragments*, which feature images of rich dishes, fine clothes and passion for horses. In the *Royal Debate*, the portrayal of the wealth is even more detailed and clearly depicts a rich member of the ruling class who owns various estates, servants, and loves hunting. This kind of sinner and the stigmatisation of hunting will be constant in the ‘Soul and Body’ poems from the *Royal Debate* onwards.

Perhaps the most striking innovation on a traditional motif found in the *Royal Debate* is the food-for-worms theme, which in this case is accompanied by a head-to-toe description of the body. This pattern, according to Brent,

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<sup>60</sup> Heningham, pp. 113-114. Heningham’s edition retains the manuscript’s punctuation and the abbreviation &, and it does not distinguish between *v* and *u*. I have edited her text with a modern layout and punctuation. On these verses, see also Brent, pp. 8-9.



parallels the rhetorical scheme called *effictio*, originally a legal device used for the identification of criminals.<sup>61</sup> The description, more focused on the upper part of the body, is developed in vv. 951-1056;<sup>62</sup> it includes references to hair, eyes, ears, nose, mouth, lips, teeth, palate, tongue, throat, breast, arms, navel, stomach and belly, hands and nails, knees, and feet. Every part of the body is connected to a specific sin, resulting in a sort of reworking of the previous *ubi sunt* section (vv. 1017-1026):

Ingratus est stomachus  
epulis ac potibus;  
Intra ista viscera  
non intrudes fercula  
Ferarum nec volucrum  
ultra, neque piscium:  
In hunc ventrem veterem  
vini multitudinem  
Non infundes amplius  
vasis multiformibus.<sup>63</sup>

(The stomach is hostile to foods or drinks; inside these innards you do not put courses of game or birds any more, nor fish: in this old belly you do not pour any more various kinds of wine in multiform vessels).

The body has a single reply. It claims that all its misdeeds were only caused by the will of the soul, which is the one to blame. The body reverses the *ubi sunt* enumeration, using it against its counterpart (vv. 1679-1700):

Nichil mali gesseram

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<sup>61</sup> See Brent, pp. 9-11. On the *effictio*, see Alice Colby, *The Portrait in Twelfth-Century French Literature. An Example of the Stylistic Originality of Chrétien de Troyes* (Genève: Librairie Droz, 1965), pp. 89-90.

<sup>62</sup> Heningham, pp. 144-48.

<sup>63</sup> Heningham, p. 147.

nisi per te miseram.  
Ego nec argenteos  
quesissem, nec aureos,  
Torques, gemmas, anulos,  
nec frumenti modios;  
Non preciosissimas  
vestes, neque vineas,  
Neque greges pecorum,  
neque saltus nemorum  
Non canes, non volucres  
neque equos agiles,  
Neque tam innumera  
epularum genera  
Byssum neque purpuram  
neque pellem variam,  
Nec pompam multiplicem  
nec formosam coniugem;  
Michi non infamia  
inhesisset aliqua  
Nec concupiscentia  
nisi per te anima.<sup>64</sup>

(I had done nothing wrong if not because of you, o wretched one. I would have sought neither silver nor gold; nor necklaces, gems, rings, nor pecks of barley, nor very valuable clothes, nor wines, nor flocks of sheep, nor woodland pastures. Neither dogs nor birds, nor nimble horses, nor these countless kinds of banquets, silk or purple garments, nor furs of various colours, nor various kinds of pomp, nor a beautiful wife: no dishonour would have attached to on me, nor I would have felt desire, if not because of you, o soul).

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<sup>64</sup> Heningham, pp. 176-77.

Brent, who ascribes to Aristotle the argument that the deeds carried out by the body originated in the will of the soul,<sup>65</sup> argues that the ‘forensic acumen’ of the body ‘owes a significant debt to dialectic instruction in the twelfth century cathedral schoolroom and the renaissance of interest in Aristotelian logic’<sup>66</sup>. Although I agree with the ‘forensic’ element, we need to be cautious about ascribing it to the recovery of Aristotle. As Abelson points out, ‘the *Topics* and the *Sophistici Elenchi* though translated and commented upon by Boethius in the fifth century were absolutely unknown before the end of the twelfth’.<sup>67</sup> Similarly, Aristotle’s treatise *De Anima* was virtually unavailable in the Latin West before the twelfth century.<sup>68</sup> Could the *Royal Debate* poet have been one of the first scholars to have access to such works, or did he rely on previous rhetorical schemes? The word *disputatio* is actually used in the poem (v. 1921) and the body parallels its relationship with the soul to that between a sailor and his ship (vv. 1849-1872), a simile also found in Aristotle’s *De Anima* II.1, 413a8-9. Nevertheless, these elements are not conclusive. The term *disputatio* was commonly used for defining a debate also before the Aristotelian renaissance. Moreover, Heningham and Dudley have

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<sup>65</sup> Cf. Brent, p. 14.

<sup>66</sup> Brent, pp. 12-13.

<sup>67</sup> Abelson, p. 75.

<sup>68</sup> See Sander W. De Boer, *The Science of the Soul: The Commentary Tradition on Aristotle's De anima, c. 1260-c. 1360* (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2013), pp. 15-16. As De Boer writes (p. 16), ‘the first Latin translation of the *De anima* was made, directly from the Greek, by James of Venice around the middle of the twelfth century and has been labelled the *translatio vetus*. Around 1230 a second translation (the *translatio nova*) was made from the Arabic, which also included Averroes’s long commentary on the text. [...]. The most influential translation, however, is the so-called *recensio nova*, which was made by William of Moerbeke and finished around 1266–7. This *recensio nova* is a revision of the *translatio vetus*’. Furthermore, according to De Ridder-Symoens, p. 315, *De anima* ‘only began to have an impact at the beginning of the thirteenth century’.

traced back the image of the sailor and the ship to a possible Coptic source preceding the recovery of Aristotle.<sup>69</sup>

If we consider the structure of the *disputatio*, the soul of the *Royal Debate* introduces a ‘question’, in the sense of a first, fundamental statement – the body is responsible for the sins – rejected by a ‘proposition in answer’ by the body – the soul’s fate is decided by God and the body is subjected to the soul’s will –, but there is an absence of any ‘objection to proposition’. The soul’s final speech is not an objection to the body’s answer, but an address to God, an audacious and unorthodox ‘accusation directed against God for His injustice in creating a frail creature like man’,<sup>70</sup> whose nature is imperfect and fallible (see vv. 2241-2242: ‘o natura hominis | nunc dei, nunc demonis’, “o nature of mankind, now that of a god, now that of a demon”). The debate remains unresolved. The power of the speeches lies in the display of rhetorical strategies and not in the persuasive effect: a clear example is the food-for-worms theme, which has been elaborated into an extended head-to-toe description. The structure of this debate does not echo the pattern of the *disputatio*. A possible reason for this is that the *Royal Debate* is early, belonging to the twelfth century; therefore, it is unlikely to have been influenced by the “New Logic”, which did not appear in the West until the second half of the twelfth century.

Rather than suggesting the rebirth of dialectic, the two speeches of the *Royal Debate* seem closer to the traditional model of the *partes orationis* as

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<sup>69</sup> See Dudley, p. 127; Heningham, p. 220. On the simile in Aristotle’s *De Anima*, and its analogues in ancient Greek philosophy, see Theodore Tracy, ‘The Soul/Boatman Analogy in Aristotle’s *De Anima*’, *Classical Philology*, 77.2 (1982), 97-112; Abraham P. Bos, *The Soul and Its Instrumental Body: A Reinterpretation of Aristotle’s Philosophy of Living Nature* (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), pp. 123-35.

<sup>70</sup> Heningham, pp. 15-16. On the structure of the *disputatio*, see Murphy, pp. 102-03.

described by Isidore in his *De Rectorica* (a standard medieval textbook on the theme): *exordium*, narration, argumentation, and conclusion.<sup>71</sup> The first speech of the body and the body's answer are two long orations, a structure which is reminiscent of a legal case in a court, and does not resemble a classroom disputation. Brent himself has recognized a 'forensic acumen' in the body's answer, 'as one might expect in the opening statements of an attorney',<sup>72</sup> and the use of the *effictio* motif can be seen in the same light. Ferguson, who notes a variety of rhetorical devices employed by the soul in its first speech,<sup>73</sup> argues for a 'difference' between body and soul in 'their method of debating', which 'has overtones of the great debate of the Middle Ages over the relative value of dialectic and of rhetoric'.<sup>74</sup> I would rather suggest that the two speeches of the body and the soul mimic two opposite orations: the soul provides evidence of the body's many faults and the body aims to mitigate or deny its culpability. The very beginning of the soul's speech is closer to the *exordium* of an oration than the traditional "woe is me" lamentation (vv. 25-34):

Corpus os aperiam  
tui ad infamiam.  
De te querimoniam  
Non iniuste faciam.  
Si prestetur spatium  
nobis ad colloquium  
Divulgare satagam  
te ad ignominiam:  
Iam fiem noticia

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<sup>71</sup> On Isidore, see Abelson, p. 57.

<sup>72</sup> Brent, p. 13.

<sup>73</sup> Ferguson, pp. 29-35.

<sup>74</sup> Ferguson, p. 43.

de tua nequitia.<sup>75</sup>

(O body, I shall open my mouth to your discredit. I shall make, not wrongfully, a great complaint of you. If we have the opportunity to discuss this, I shall complain to expose your ignominy: I shall now make known your wickedness).

The incipit of the body's reply (vv. 1507-1510) has the same forensic tone:

Multis testimoniis

tuis querimoniis

Contraire potero:

si tempus habuero.<sup>76</sup>

(I shall be able to contradict your lamentations with many proofs, if I have time).

To sum up, although clearly informed by principles of theological discussions and rhetorical figures, the *Royal Debate* also shows traces of the former 'Soul's Address' tradition, reworked for an audience trained more in forensic rhetoric than in dialectic: *contraire* and not *confutare* (or *probare*, as claimed by the body of the *Visio Philiberti*, v. 100). It is my belief that this work reflects a stage in which the subordination of rhetoric to dialectic was still to come. The debate form had been already developed, but not fully structured under the Aristotelian influence and the *disputatio* pattern. The debate of body and soul in the *Royal* poem is more an opposition of two orations based on homiletic material than a complex dialogue. Heningham notes that 'the simpler two part [sic] division [...] is much closer to the primitive homilies than are the clever and balanced arguments of the "Noctis" [the *Visio Philiberti*]'.<sup>77</sup> In the *Visio Philiberti*, in particular, the body's case is transferred from the court to the classroom.

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<sup>75</sup> Heningham, p. 103.

<sup>76</sup> Heningham, p. 158.

<sup>77</sup> Heningham, p. 81.

### 3.3. THE *VISIO PHILIBERTI*

The *Visio Philiberti*, also known as *Visio Fulberti*, *Noctis sub silentio*, or *Dialogus inter corpus et animam*, is preserved in an impressive amount of manuscripts: 132 according to the first enumeration by Walther,<sup>78</sup> a number that today, following a recent study by Cartlidge and Baker, has reached 188.<sup>79</sup> In another study, Cartlidge ascribes the lack of scholarship on the *Visio Philiberti* to this enormous number of versions, often different from each other, which makes a critical edition of this poem virtually impossible.<sup>80</sup> As noted by Bossy, two major versions of the poem exist; the most widely transmitted has the incipit ‘Noctis sub silentio tempore brumali’, while a second version, with a longer narrative introduction and exhortatory conclusion, begins ‘Vir quidam exstiterat dudum heremita’.<sup>81</sup> Scholars, including Cartlidge, usually adopt the text of ‘Noctis sub silentio tempore brumali’ printed by Wright, considered representative enough of the overall structure and content of the *Visio Philiberti* as well as based on one of the oldest manuscripts (London, British Library, MS Harley 978, fols 68<sup>v</sup>-74<sup>v</sup>).<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>78</sup> See Walther, pp. 211-14.

<sup>79</sup> David P. Baker and Neil Cartlidge, ‘Manuscripts of the medieval Latin Debate between Body and Soul (*Visio Philiberti*)’, *Notes and Queries*, 61.2 (2015), 196-201. See also Clark Sutherland Nothrup, ‘Dialogus Inter Corpus et Animam: A Fragment and a Translation’, *PMLA*, 16.4 (1901), 503-25. The *Visio Philiberti* can be considered no less than a medieval “best-seller”: it was translated and adapted in a large number of European languages (Castellan, Old French, Italian, German, and Middle English, among others), as will be mentioned below.

<sup>80</sup> See Neil Cartlidge, ‘In the Silence of a Midwinter Night’, pp. 24-25.

<sup>81</sup> See Bossy, p. 145. An edition of the second version is in Édélstand Du Méril, ed., *Poésies populaires latines antérieures au douzième siècle* (Paris: Brockhaus et Avenarius, 1843), pp. 217-30.

<sup>82</sup> See Cartlidge, p. 27.

I shall follow this approach as well.

The *Visio Philiberti* and its immediate source, the *Royal Debate*, share a similar plot: an initial address of the Soul followed by a reply from the Body. Many passages of the *Visio* directly mirror the *Royal Debate*, as Heningham has shown.<sup>83</sup> Moreover, many versions of the *Visio Philiberti*, including the one printed by Wright, feature a final scene where the Soul is carried back to hell by demons.

Nevertheless, the *Visio Philiberti* is different in tone and structure. As stated above, it displays the first-person narrator innovation, not found in the *Royal Debate*. It is also written in a different form: Goliardic verse,<sup>84</sup> which might be a clue to an origin in an academic context. Another major difference between the two Latin poems is the number of speeches, which in the *Visio Philiberti* is four for the body and three for the soul. In its first speech, the soul starts its “classic” lamentation, stating that the body sentenced both of them to eternal damnation due to its sinful conduct. This passage includes the *quid profuit* motif (vv. 20-23); the *ubi sunt* motif (vv. 42-54); a reference to the motif of the shallow grave (vv. 55-56); the indifference of friends and beloved ones (vv. 63-78), also found in the *Worcester Fragments*; and the ‘food-for-

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<sup>83</sup> Heningham, pp. 68-83. See also Walther, p. 77. Kleinert’s dissertation on the *Visio Philiberti* still remains a useful resource for the textual parallels between the Latin poem and the vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ texts. See Gustav Kleinert, *Über den Streit zwischen Leib und Seele. Ein Beitrag zur Entwicklungsgeschichte der Visio Philiberti* (Halle: Universität Halle-Wittenberg, 1880).

<sup>84</sup> See Bossy, p. 145. Goliardic verse is *stanzaic*, in quatrains; *mono-rhymed*, with rhyming scheme aaaa/bbbb/cccc; *syllabic*, 13-syllable lines, in hemistiches of 6 and 7 syllables. See Dag Norberg, *An Introduction to the Study of Medieval Latin Versification*, trans., ed. and introd. by Jan Ziolkowski (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), p. 214. See also p. 185 for the resemblances between Goliardic verse and Germanic metre in Germany and England.



worms' motif (v. 90). The soul claims to have been shaped after God, purified from every crime by baptism, and then again 'blackened' (*denigrata*) by crimes because of the body (vv. 25-29). The motif of the shallow grave that lies on the body's nose (in contrast to the tall mansions where it used to dwell) echoes post-Conquest vernacular poetry like *The Grave*, *Latemest Day* and, once again, the *Worcester Fragments*. The conclusion of this long complaint also imitates the end of the older 'Soul's Address' texts. The soul does not expect a reply from the body, and is set to depart (vv. 91-92: 'hic non possum amplius stare, jam recedo: | nescis ad opposita respondere credo',<sup>85</sup> "I cannot stay no more here, I already retire: you do not know how to answer back, I believe". With an impressive *coup de théâtre*, the body raises its head, "as it lived again" (v. 94: the same expression is found in the *Royal Debate*, v. 1458), and answers its attacker with "plenty of plain arguments" (v. 99).

The body, in its first reply, seems willing to share part of the responsibility: from its point of view, the soul's speech is partly true, and partly nonsense (v. 100), a strategy not found in the corresponding passage of the *Royal Debate* (vv. 1507-1510). In its answer, the body reaffirms that the soul has been shaped by God and provided with *ratio*, with reason. Thus, the soul failed its guiding role (vv. 110-121). The statement that, without the soul, the body cannot perform any action (v. 122) strengthens this argument. This view, which goes beyond the commonplace idea of the soul as the master of the body, might have been influenced by Aristotle's basic notion of the soul as the element that distinguishes living from non-living.<sup>86</sup> (Such an answer may actually sound odd, as the body is speaking, but the poet was clearly not

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<sup>85</sup> Wright, p. 98. I am most thankful to the Medieval Latin Reading Group of the University of Bristol, Centre for Medieval Studies, academic year 2016-2107, for their precious help in translating the text of the *Visio Philiberti*.

<sup>86</sup> For an overview of the concept of the soul in Aristotle's *De Anima*, see De Boer, pp. 18-23.

concerned with this obvious paradox).<sup>87</sup> In its second speech, the soul admits its fault (vv. 159-160), saying that it was incapable of restraining the body's sinful desires. Nonetheless, the soul still claims that the body is more to blame, due to its frailty and its unwillingness to do penance (vv. 146-170).

From a theological perspective, it is interesting that the body does not deny its "inferiority", which, on the contrary, is used as evidence of the soul's culpability. The body likens its relationship with the soul to that between a mistress and a handmaid. In the body's view, the soul is more to blame because it "made itself maid, in spite of being the mistress" (v. 119). This comparison is not unusual in medieval literature, and it is somewhat similar, for example, to the relationship between a "noble guest" and a "servant" found in *Riddle 43* of the Exeter Book.<sup>88</sup> The soul is "superior" because it was provided with reason and sense. For this reason, it is invested with a greater responsibility (vv. 193-202):

Cui major gratia virtutum donatur,  
ab eo vult ratio quod plus exigatur.  
Vitam et memoriam sed et intellectum  
tibi dedit Dominus sensumque perfectum,  
quibus tu compescere deberes affectum  
pravum, et diligere quicquid erat rectum.  
Postquam tot virtutibus ditata fuisti,  
et mihi tunc fatuæ pronam te dedisti,  
meisque blanditiis numquam restitisti,  
satis liquet omnibus quod plus deliquisti.<sup>89</sup>

(To him whom a greater grace of virtue is given, Reason wants that more be demanded. God gave life, memory, and intellect to you, and

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<sup>87</sup> For a different view on this paradox, see Bossy, p. 149.

<sup>88</sup> See Chapter 1.3.

<sup>89</sup> Wright, p. 102.

complete sense; with them, you should have restrained your wicked impulses, and have had regard for anything that was right. Since you were enriched with all virtues, and you made yourself subject to me, foolish as I am, and never resisted my blandishment, it is evident enough that you have transgressed more).

At this point, the body reaffirms its stronger argument. The body, without the soul, is simply a corpse that cannot perform any action (vv. 203-208):

Corpus dicit iterum corde cum amaro,  
“Dic mihi, si noveris, argumento claro,  
exeunte spiritu a carne quid sit caro?  
movetne se postea cito, sive raro?  
Videtne? Vel loquitur? Non est ergo clarum,  
quod spiritus vivificat, caro prodest parum?”<sup>90</sup>

(The body says again with bitter heart, Tell me, if you know, with clear argument: what is the body after the spirit has left the flesh? Does it move then quickly, or unfrequently? Does it see? Or speak? Is not it obvious, then that the spirit gives life and the body is of little worth?)

This passage might have been loosely inspired by a section of the soul’s speech of the *Royal Debate* (vv. 559-566), but in the *Visio Philiberti* it is the body, and not the soul, which uses the lack of senses as a probative argument. The soul of the *Royal Debate* bitterly claimed that the body could “feel”, “hear”, and “see the light” through its intervention; in the *Visio*, this concept is a proof that the body does not have independence of action.<sup>91</sup>

In a third, short reply, the soul starts to weep and envies the condition of

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<sup>90</sup> Wright, p. 102.

<sup>91</sup> See Heningham, p. 127: ‘Per me namque senseras | per me et audieras | Per me lucem videras | per me loqui noveras; | Ego cibum sumere | ego gressum ponere | Ego motum omnibus | dabam tui artubus’, “Indeed, you had felt through me, through me, and had heard; through me you had seen the light, through me you had known how to speak; I took the food, I set the pace, I have given every movement to your limbs”.

the animals, whose souls are not bound to damnation (vv. 227-230), a notion borrowed from the *Royal Debate* (vv. 1717-1745).<sup>92</sup> It is worth noting that, in the *Visio Philiberti*, the initial contrast between body and soul gets less and less sharp, by means of a play of reciprocal concessions. Both contenders attack the fallacies of each other's arguments, as well as accepting part of the blame and acknowledging each other's skilfulness. The development of the debate is dialectical rather than rhetorical. If we refer once again to the structure of the *disputatio*, the 'question' of the *Visio Philiberti* would be the soul's assumption that the body bears all the responsibility of the sins committed in a lifetime. The 'proposition in answer', stated by the body, would be that the soul must guide the body and that the body, without the soul, is dead and cannot move or act. The 'objection to proposition' corresponds with the Soul's reply that its will was not strong enough to avoid the body's misbehaviour, and the 'answer to objection' is the reaffirmation of the miserable condition of a soulless body.

This pattern lacks the presence of a *determinatio* by a master: in the *Visio Philiberti*, in fact, the narrator simply introduces the debate into a dreamlike framework, but he does not take up any active role.<sup>93</sup> The relative proximity

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<sup>92</sup> The passage of the *Royal Debate* is also more articulate, and performed by the body. In the *Visio Philiberti*, the soul laments the "happy state" ('felix conditio') of sheep; in the *Royal Debate*, the body regrets not being a bird, or an animal, or a fish, or a log.

<sup>93</sup> An even closer adherence to the pattern of the *disputatio* can be found in the early thirteenth-century Latin 'Soul and Body' debate *O caro, cara vilitas* (edition in Walther, pp. 215-16). This stanzaic poem (nine-line stanzas, rhyme scheme ababbccc) displays a well-crafted structure in which each stanza is assigned to one of the contenders. *O caro, cara vilitas* is not inscribed in a dream-vision framework, and the debate starts *in medias res*; the body and the soul argue on a given theme (if God made two sexes, can multiple sexual relationships be allowed?). At the end of the debate, *Racio* ('Reason') acting like a master, gives its determination and warns the body to follow the soul's guidance. On *O caro, cara vilitas* see Helen Phillips, 'Dreams and

of the structure of the *Visio Philiberti* to the pattern of the *disputatio*, and its dialectical, philosophical, and theological issues all make this poem a cultured and enjoyable product of the emergence of the universities. It is therefore arguable that the *Visio Philiberti* can be set in the context of the subordination of rhetoric to dialectic, whereas the forensic structure of the *Royal Debate* is still a product of rhetorical traditions. The differences between the two poems reflect the definitions of ‘dialectic’ and ‘rhetoric’ given by Weijers:

Dialectic is the art of discussion. It formulates the rules of the dialectical debate in which one of two adversaries argues against the other’s thesis and aims to force him to admit the contrary of this thesis. Dialectic teaches not only how to attack a thesis, but also how to defend it. The two adversaries, in their complex game of interrogations and answers, are not really interested in the thesis: they only play the game to win the debate. Rhetoric, in contrast, does not aim at this kind of discussion; it proceeds by a continuous discourse and the audience, who have to be

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Dream Lore’, in *Studies in the Harley Manuscript: The Scribes, Contents, and Social Contexts of British Library MS Harley 2253*, ed. by Susanna Fein (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2000), pp. 241-59, at pp. 254-55; Bossy, 144-63. A particular pattern is developed in *Cogis me litem describere spiritualem*, preserved in two manuscripts (edition in Wilmart, pp. 196-209). This debate, in elegiac couplets, seems to be a joining link between *declamatio* and *disputatio*. Body and soul argue on the difference between spiritual and earthly life. At first, each contender speaks in a two-couplet stanza; then the soul embarks in a long *peroratio* (where it also calls the body ‘*crudelis carcer*’, ‘cruel prison’), followed by a short reply by the body. After two other exchanges, the soul gives another long speech. The debate is concluded by the determination of *Discretio* (‘Discernment’), which states that sins find their origin in the weakness of the flesh but are committed through the soul’s agreement, with a reference to the Original Sin. As noted by Bossy, p. 155, the debate is conducted ‘along theological lines, making ample and often entertaining use of biblical *exempla*. Although the debaters are compared to Adam (Spirit) and Eve (Flesh), they remain highly abstract personifications and the Spirit is unassailably right throughout the debate’.

convinced, do not intervene.<sup>94</sup>

In the context of the ‘game’ of the *Visio Philiberti*, the fourth and final speech of the soul is actually a sort of narrative. The body asks its counterpart about the otherworld, and if there is any hope of redemption for noble and rich people (vv. 232-238). The soul, before being carried away by demons (259-304), describes Hell, stating that no one can get out of there (239-258). This knowledge of the laws ruling the underworld is consistent with the statement that the soul is already enduring the eternal pains, vv. 38-41:

In pœnis miserrima sum et semper ero!

omnes linguæ seculi non dicerent pro vero

unam pœnam minimam quam infelix fero;

sed magis me cruciat quod veniam non spero.<sup>95</sup>

(Most miserable, I am, and forever will be, in punishments! All the tongues in the world could not truly tell a single small punishment that I, unhappy, endure; but, above all, what tortures me is that I do not hope for forgiveness).

On the one hand, the fact that in the narrative the soul speaks to the body before being dragged to hell implies that the soul is not presently in hell. On the other hand, what the soul actually says is that he is already enduring the pains of hell, and that there is no escape from them. At the same time, the idea that the appearance of the soul will become similar to that of the fiends seems to suggest a permanent transformation which excludes the possibility of a periodical respite.<sup>96</sup> There is a contradiction here which is possibly due to co-

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<sup>94</sup> Weijers, p. 24.

<sup>95</sup> Wright, p. 97.

<sup>96</sup> This passage will not be adopted in any of the Middle English versions of the *Visio Philiberti*. It is hard to say whether this is a precise authorial choice (e.g. this passage was deemed too contradictory) or a coincidence. Middle English authors do not include descriptions of the actual pains of hell; they rather focus on what it is expected to happen once the soul has been dragged

existence of two different traditions: one in which the soul visits the body on a day when he has a temporary respite from hell; the other in which the soul addresses the body at the time of death (which is also the time alluded to in vv. 5-8, when the narrator sees the sorrowful soul coming out of the body). Furthermore, nothing in the final description of the pains of hell implies that the soul is returning to the underworld; on the contrary, the fiends' behaviour and words imply that they are tormenting the soul for the first time.<sup>97</sup> The poet of the *Visio Philiberti* was possibly not too concerned with the difference between the two traditions, and simply chose the most effective ideas as it suited him. Cartlidge also notes that the description of the torments is 'implicitly self-contradictory: the text tells us that no writer or painter in the world could ever adequately describe the devils' malice [...] but then goes on to attempt to do so anyway – with a predictable lack of success'.<sup>98</sup> In this instance, rather than falling into contradiction, the poet was probably using the rhetorical device called *apophasis*, described by Curtius as 'inexpressibility topos'.<sup>99</sup> However, all these ambiguities will be resolved in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, where references to any previous knowledge of hell will be omitted and where the "unspeakable" will not be spoken.

### 3.4. THE ANGLO-NORMAN DEBATES

Before discussing the Middle English 'Soul and Body' poetry, it is worth

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to hell. It is worth noting that the descriptions of the torments in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* takes place *before* the soul is carried to hell (see 3.5).

<sup>97</sup> On this passage, see Batiouchkof, pp. 527-28.

<sup>98</sup> Cartlidge, p. 36.

<sup>99</sup> See Ernst Robert Curtius, *European literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, translated by Willard R. Trask with a new introduction by Colin Burrow (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, new edition, 2013), pp. 159-62.

briefly outlining the Anglo-Norman tradition related to the Latin debate poems discussed above, in order to adequately set the Middle English texts in their cultural context.<sup>100</sup> The Anglo-Norman ‘Soul and Body’ texts do not seem to be textually related to the Middle English poems; nonetheless, they represent significant analogues and also offer further evidence of the popularity of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme in Britain.<sup>101</sup>

Although preserved in only one manuscript, the *Royal Debate* exerted a remarkable influence on the subsequent treatments of the theme. Firstly, it is the immediate source for the Anglo-Norman poem *Un samedi par nuit*.<sup>102</sup> The *Samedi*, also known as *Desputisun de l'âme et du corps*, is a poem of hexasyllabic verses, rhyming in couplets, composed in England in the second

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<sup>100</sup> I do not take into consideration the various attestations of the theme in Continental France, which would deserve a study of its own. The *oil*-domain features a verse translation of the *Visio Philiberti* (*Vision de Fulbert*), preserved in more than twenty manuscripts. See Capozza, 9-10; Laurent Brun, ed., ‘Le débat du corps et de l'âme’, in *Archives de littérature du Moyen Âge (ARLIMA)*, <[www.arlima.net/ad/debat\\_du\\_corps\\_et\\_de\\_lame.html](http://www.arlima.net/ad/debat_du_corps_et_de_lame.html)>, last accessed October 2018; Emily J. Richards, ‘Body-Soul Debates in English, French and German Manuscripts, c.1200-c.1500’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2009), 80-121. Independent prose and poetic versions of the debate between the Body and the Soul also exist, along with the poem *Despit du cors*, which is related to the old tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’. See Brun, ed., ‘Le despit du cors’, *ARLIMA*, <[www.arlima.net/ad/despit\\_du\\_cors.html](http://www.arlima.net/ad/despit_du_cors.html)>, last accessed October 2018; Capozza, 11-13.

<sup>101</sup> The insular ‘Soul and Body’ literature also comprises rich, developed, and independent Welsh and Irish traditions, featuring prose and poetic debates between Body and Soul, some of which rework the *Visio Philiberti*. For a study of the Welsh and Irish ‘Soul and Body’ literature see Fulton, pp. 96-115.

<sup>102</sup> Editions in Wright, pp. 321-33; Hermann Varnhagen, ed., *Das altfranzösische Gedicht Un samedi par nuit*, Erlanger Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie, 1 (Erlangen and Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1889), pp. 113-96; Capozza, pp. 111-231. See also Brun, ‘La desputisun de l'ame et du corps’, *ARLIMA*, <[www.arlima.net/ad/desputisun\\_de\\_lame\\_et\\_du\\_corps.html](http://www.arlima.net/ad/desputisun_de_lame_et_du_corps.html)>, last accessed October 2018.



half of the twelfth century (a date very close to the sole witness of the *Royal Debate*), and preserved in four manuscripts, with a fifth copy now lost.<sup>103</sup> The structure of *Un samedi par nuit* is based on that of the *Royal Debate*, and the Anglo-Norman poet often translates the Latin material closely.<sup>104</sup> Capozza describes the relationship between the *Royal Debate* and the *Samedi* in terms of adjustments to the features of the Latin poem, rather than variation on its model.<sup>105</sup> So, *Un samedi par nuit* inherits the overall pattern of its source: two long juxtaposed orations, rather than a structured dispute. Examples of adjustments are to be found in the switch from the third-person vision of the *Royal Debate* (the ‘cuidam pontifici’ of v. 3) to the first-person speaker of the Anglo-Norman poem<sup>106</sup> and the selection of the *ubi sunt* elements made by the vernacular author.<sup>107</sup>

*Un samedi par nuit*, in turn, influenced other vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ texts: it was adapted in a twelfth-century Castilian poetic fragment, *Disputa del alma y el cuerpo*,<sup>108</sup> and, in prose, in a thirteenth-century Old Norse homily preserved in the *Norwegian Book of Homilies*.<sup>109</sup> Furthermore, the Anglo-

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<sup>103</sup> Capozza, pp. 33-35. See also Ruth J. Dean with the collaboration of Maureen B.M. Boulton, *Anglo-Norman Literature: A Guide to Texts and Manuscripts*, Occasional Publications Series, 3 (London: Anglo-Norman Text Society, 1999), n. 692.

<sup>104</sup> For the relationship between the two texts, see Heningham, pp. 43-61; Ackerman, p. 544; Capozza, pp. 35-51.

<sup>105</sup> See Capozza, p. 36.

<sup>106</sup> Capozza, pp. 38-39.

<sup>107</sup> Capozza, pp. 44-46.

<sup>108</sup> See Antonio G. Soliande, ‘La disputa del Alma y el Cuerpo: Comparación con su Original Francés’, *Hispanic Review*, 1.3 (1933), 196-207; Francisco Núñez Román, ‘Una versión toscana del *Contrasto dell’anima con lo corpo* de Antonio Olivieri’, *Cuadernos de Filología Italiana*, 16 (2009), 137-66, at p. 139.

<sup>109</sup> See Ole Widding and Hans Bekker-Nielsen, ‘A Debate of the Body and the Soul in Old Norse Literature’, *Mediaeval Studies*, 21 (1959), 272-89; Stefka G. Eriksen, ‘Body and Soul in

Norman poem was once considered to have influenced also the Middle English debate *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*,<sup>110</sup> before Heningham demonstrated that this influence must, instead, be ascribed to the *Royal Debate*. In other words, the parallels between the *Samedi* and *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* can be explained by the common adoption of material from the *Royal Debate* by the authors of these vernacular texts.<sup>111</sup>

One further debate between Body and Soul, the *Desputoison de l'âme et du corps* (*Si cum jeo ju en un lit*), is transmitted in Anglo-Norman. Scholars have ascribed it to Nicolas Bozon, an Anglo-Norman Franciscan friar active in the early fourteenth century. This poem, in tail-rhyme stanzas, is preserved in four manuscripts dating from the end of the thirteenth to the beginning of the fourteenth centuries;<sup>112</sup> in two of the earliest manuscripts (London, British Library, MS Cotton Vitellius C.VIII and London, British Library, MS Arundel 288), the poem is a later addition.<sup>113</sup> Notably, the version in London, British Library, MS Arundel 288, also incorporates scattered verses from *Un samedi par nuit*,<sup>114</sup> which were probably regarded as being useful to expand some

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Old Norse Culture', in *Intellectual Culture in Medieval Scandinavia, c. 1100-1350*, ed. by Stefka Georgieva Eriksen (Turnhout: Brepols, 2016), pp. 393-428. On the relationship between the Old Norse homily, the Castilian fragment, and the *Samedi*, see also Heningham, pp. 62-68, 230-42.

<sup>110</sup> Cf. Wilhelm Linow, ed., *Pe Desputisoun bitwen þe Bodi and þe Soule*, Erlanger Beiträge zur Englischen Philologie, 1 (Erlangen and Leipzig: A. Deichertsche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1889), p. 13; Heningham, p. 85.

<sup>111</sup> See Heningham, pp. 84-96.

<sup>112</sup> Edition in Edmund Stengel, 'La desputeison de l'âme et du corps', *Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie*, 4 (1880), 74-80. The poem is discussed by Richards, pp. 53-79. See also Brun, 'Nicole Bozon', *ARLIMA*, <[www.arlima.net/mp/nicole\\_bozon.html](http://www.arlima.net/mp/nicole_bozon.html)>, last accessed October 2018; Dean, n. 691.

<sup>113</sup> Richards, pp. 72-76.

<sup>114</sup> See Varnhagen, p. 116; Richards, p. 37; Capozza, p. 79.

sections of the poem,<sup>115</sup> in order to increase its didactic strength.

Stengel's edition of the *Desputoison de l'âme et du corps* is based on the version preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Selden Supra 74. As noted by Richards, the text in this manuscript 'contains five stanzas respectively at the beginning and end of the poem not found in any other version'; these stanzas 'contextualise the poem within a prayer to Mary for intercession; but also place the body-soul debate itself within the framework of a meeting between a younger and an older man'.<sup>116</sup> The debate, inscribed in this unique framework, has been considered by scholars to be a work inspired by but independent from the *Visio Philiberti*.<sup>117</sup> The poet of the *Desputoison de l'âme et du corps*, in fact, freely adapts and reworks material from the Latin *Visio*. Clear examples of this process are the opening speech, in which the soul emphasises the difference between the former glory of the body and its present condition (stanzas 7-9 in Stengel's edition),<sup>118</sup> and the concluding section, in which the last reply of the Soul of the *Visio Philiberti*, regarding the laws that rule the underworld, is loosely adapted into lively exchanges of questions and answers between Body and Soul (stanzas 32-51). This long section (which in MS Arundel 288 is further extended by means of the inclusion of verses from *Un samedi par nuit*)<sup>119</sup> emphasises the didactic and penitential message of *Desputoison de l'âme et du corps*, showing the possibilities provided by a skilful adaptation of the material of the *Visio Philiberti*. These possibilities are fully realised in the chief Middle English debate poem between Body and

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<sup>115</sup> See Richards, pp. 74-76, who notes expansions at points 'particularly important to the writer'.

<sup>116</sup> Richards, p. 54.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Batiouchkof, p. 575; Capozza, p. 11.

<sup>118</sup> See Stengel, p. 76.

<sup>119</sup> See Richards, pp. 74-75.

Soul, *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*.

### 3.5. *ALS I LAY IN A WINTERIS NYT* BETWEEN CLASSROOM AND PULPIT

The *Visio Philiberti*, with its wide diffusion, had a direct influence on two Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ debates: *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* (also known as *Disputisoun Bitwen þe Body and þe Soule*) and the *Porkington Debate*. Both of them are loosely based on the *Visio Philiberti*, but *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* also borrows some elements from the *Royal Debate*.<sup>120</sup>

*Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* is not only the most celebrated ‘Soul and Body’ work of any period (‘the most impressive of the Body and Soul poems in English’, as Conlee puts it),<sup>121</sup> but also the English vernacular debate with the largest manuscript evidence (seven witnesses).<sup>122</sup> The poem, which has a

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<sup>120</sup> The relevant parallels between the *Royal Debate* and *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* are discussed in Heningham, pp. 84-96.

<sup>121</sup> Conlee, p. 18. In his introduction to Child’s early twentieth-century modernised version of the poem, George Lyman Kittredge praises the Middle English poet, noting that ‘the somewhat scholastic argument of the Vision of Philibert gives place under his hands to dialogue of uncommon impressiveness and much dramatic power’: Francis James Child, *The Debate of the Body and the Soul*, with an introduction by George L. Kittredge (Boston, MA: R.E. Lee Company, 1908), p. ix.

<sup>122</sup> Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108, fols 200<sup>r</sup>-203<sup>r</sup>, last quarter of the thirteenth century: cf. Margaret Laing, *Catalogue of Sources for a Linguistic Atlas of Early Medieval English* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1993), p. 136; Conlee, p. 19; Edinburgh, National Library of Scotland, MS Advocates 19.2.1 (*Auchinleck MS*), fols 31<sup>vb</sup>-34<sup>vb</sup>, ca. 1330 (*LALME* LP 6510); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 3938 (*Vernon MS*), fol. 286<sup>tc</sup>, late fourteenth century (*LALME* LP 7630); Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 102, fols 136<sup>r</sup>-139<sup>v</sup>, first half of the fifteenth century (*LALME* LP 7770); London, British Library, MS Royal 18.A.x, fol. 61<sup>v</sup>, fifteenth century; London, British Library, MS Additional 22283 (*Simeon MS*), fol. 80<sup>v</sup>, late fourteenth century (*LALME* LP 7630); London, British Library, MS Additional 37787, fol. 34<sup>r</sup>, first quarter of the fifteenth century (*LALME* LP 7640). Edition in Conlee, pp. 18-49. On the

rhyme scheme of eight-line stanzas with alternate rhyme,<sup>123</sup> was probably composed in the thirteenth century;<sup>124</sup> it has not received much scholarly attention, but it is usually interpreted as a long call to repentance. ‘Few would disagree’, Liam Purdon writes, ‘with the statement that [...] *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* is about the urgent need for confession and amendment in this life’.<sup>125</sup> In a notable contribution by Robert Ackerman, this strong emphasis on the need for repentance is explained with reference to a roughly contemporary decree from the Fourth Lateran Council:

A decree of 1215 requiring all Christians to make confession at least once annually to their own parish priests was especially important because, heretofore, private, auricular confession was by no means a settled practice. Moreover, the priest was expressly enjoined, in the interests of securing a perfect confession, to pursue his penitent with respect to a knowledge of and belief in the fundamentals of the faith, such as the fourteen articles of the Creed, the Ten Commandments of the Law and the two of the Gospel, the seven Sacraments, the works of

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dates of manuscripts, see also ‘Body and Soul (5)’, in Hans Kurath, Sherman Kuhn, and Robert Lewis, eds, *Middle English Dictionary Online* (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan, 2103), <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/hyp-idx?type=byte&byte=270439>>, last accessed October 2018. The pivotal study by Linow is still of key importance for its edition of four manuscript versions (Auchinleck MS, MS Laud Misc.108, Vernon MS, MS Digby 102, plus variants from the Simeon MS) and its textual discussion. A modern English poetical rendition of the poem by Sir Theodore Martin is printed in the appendix to Linow’s study, pp. 197-209.

<sup>123</sup> See Oliver Farrar Emerson, ed., *A Middle English Reader* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1909), p. 266: ‘the metre of the poem is an eight-line stanza made up of lines with four stresses and iambic movement, riming *abababab*, with the *b* rimes more exact than the others’.

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Wright, p. 322; Linow, pp. 19-21, sets the date of composition in the second half of the thirteenth century.

<sup>125</sup> Liam O. Purdon, ‘*Als I lay in a winteris nyt* and the Second Death’, in *Mindful Spirit in Late Medieval Literature: Essays in Honor of Elizabeth D. Kirk*, ed. by Bonnie Wheeler (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), pp. 45-56, at p. 46.

mercy, and the vices and virtues.<sup>126</sup>

Nonetheless, it must be underlined that the idea of repentance, and especially of the need of amendment in life can actually be found in the ‘Soul and Body’ debates as early as the *Royal Debate*.<sup>127</sup> Most importantly, even in the earlier ‘Soul’s Address’ texts the soul rebukes the body because of the body’s carelessness about the soul’s fate. In the Old English *Soul and Body*, the Damned Soul frequently condemns the body for the lack of forethought in life (‘lyt ðu gemundest’); in the *Worcester Fragments*, F 4-15, the soul accuses its body because of its refusal to go to confession.<sup>128</sup> The increased attention to confession required by the Fourth Lateran Council (with the moral duty of performing confession once a year) could have played a role in the development of the poem, but, in my opinion, the motif of repentance in *Als I Lay* is well rooted in the earlier vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ poetry.

In his contribution, Ackerman also focuses on the relationship between *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* and popular Christianity. As Ackerman shows, the poet of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* retained the overall structure of the *Visio Philiberti*, with the exception of an additional speech assigned to each of the contenders.<sup>129</sup> Nevertheless, in his reworking of the *Visio Philiberti*, the poet

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<sup>126</sup> Ackerman, p. 545.

<sup>127</sup> See Heningham, pp. 123-24, vv. 483-490: ‘Augustinus asserit | quia male interit | qui non quam evigilat | donec mors appropriat: | hoc est omni tempore | delectatur scelere | neque mali penitet | donec mors se obsidet’, “Augustine affirms that he who does not wake up until death approaches is wholly ruined: that one always enjoys wickedness and never repents evil, until death seizes him”. Notably, Augustine is quoted as an authority; on these verses, see Brent, p. 5; Wendy Matlock, ‘Irreconcilable Differences: Law, Gender, and Judgment in Middle English Debate Poetry’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Ohio State University, 2003), pp. 139-40.

<sup>128</sup> Douglas Moffatt, ed., *The Soul’s Address to the Body. The Worcester Fragments* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1987), p. 76.

<sup>129</sup> See Ackerman, p. 544.

of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nytt* is said to have cut the most cultured passages, with ‘a more or less deliberate excision of the learned and formal element, and simultaneously, a strengthening of the popular tone of the debate’.<sup>130</sup> These popular elements, according to Ackerman, include ‘the practice of witchcraft’, ‘symbols of the pride of life’, ‘the world, the flesh, and the devil’, ‘Matins, Mass, and Evensong’, ‘false executors’, ‘the need for confession’, and ‘the hideousness of the rotting corpse.’<sup>131</sup>

To some extent, it is true that *Als I Lay* is less ‘academic’ than its Latin counterpart. The Middle English poem is certainly close to previous vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ poetry in key features such as the need for confession or the decomposition imagery. Nonetheless, the idea of the hideousness of the rotting corpse is actually derived from the poem’s other chief source, the *Royal Debate*, as Henningham has shown.<sup>132</sup> Furthermore, the reference to witchcraft is just a brief mention, and not a developed motif. We may also wonder why Ackerman takes Matins and Evensong to be popular elements. Most importantly, can the Three Foes of Men (world, flesh and devil) really be regarded as a ‘popular’ motif? The source for this passage may be St Bernard’s *De tribus inimicis hominis* or the Vernon poem *St Bernard on Man’s Three Foes*, as Conlee points out.<sup>133</sup> A piece on the Saying of St Bernard on the Three Foes of Man is also preserved in MS Laud Misc. 108, fols 198<sup>r</sup>-199<sup>r</sup> (before one of the four verse renditions of the *Visio Pauli* and

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<sup>130</sup> Ackerman, p. 555.

<sup>131</sup> Ackerman, p. 551.

<sup>132</sup> Henningham, pp. 90. See especially vv. 959-962: ‘Modo non est aliqua | meretrix tam publica | Que eam contingere | vellet’, “there is not a prostitute so promiscuous who would touch it” (the soul is referring to the body’s hair).

<sup>133</sup> See Conlee, p. 38.

one of the base texts of *Als I Lay*).<sup>134</sup> The reference to the Three Foes of Men in *Als I Lay* could ultimately derive from the *Visio Philiberti* itself, vv. 105-109:

Mundus et dæmonium legem sanxire mutuum,  
fraudis ad consortium carnem trahentes fatuam,  
eorumque blanditiis caro seducit animam,  
quam a virtutum culmine trahit ad partem infimam,  
quæ statim carnem sequitur ut bos ductus ad victimam.<sup>135</sup>

(The world and the devil stated a mutual law meant to lead the foolish flesh towards the company of fraud. With their blandishment, the body corrupts the soul, which it drags from the peak to the lowest part of virtue, and which immediately follows the flesh like an ox led to slaughter).

It is worth noting that this explanation is part of the first answer of the body, while in *Als I Lay* the Three Foes and the image of the ox are mentioned by the soul (vv. 393-400; 425-432). Thus, our vernacular poet mostly used and adapted Latin sources, and was surely an educated cleric. Rather than being ‘popular’ in origin, the reuse of the material of the *Visio Philiberti* and the *Royal Debate* by the poet of *Als I Lay* may be better defined as ‘popularising’:<sup>136</sup> a reworking of some cultured elements into a form more appealing to a lay audience:

These vernacular poems in English characterised a growing movement towards popular piety in the thirteenth century, when clerics and priests

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<sup>134</sup> See Justin J. Brent, ‘The Eschatological Cluster – Sayings of St. Bernard, Vision of St. Paul, and Dispute Between the Body and the Soul – in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108’, in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, ed. by Kimberly Bell and Julie Nelson Couch (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 157-76, at pp. 160-64.

<sup>135</sup> Wright, p. 99.

<sup>136</sup> See Fulton, p. 97.



tried to make doctrine accessible and relevant to their congregations through this kind of performative dialogue in which the body represented the human fear of death and the soul yearned for a saintly life without sin.<sup>137</sup>

This appealing form is evident from the opening octave of the poem, which adapts the ‘noctis sub silentio tempore brumali’ of the *Visio Philiberti* by playing with conventions of lyric poetry (the incipit ‘als I lay’), romance (the image of the proud knight ‘bold and proud as a lion’), and of debate poetry itself, vv. 1-8:

Als I lay in a winteris nyt,  
In a droukening bifor þe day,  
Vorsoþe I sau3 a selly syt:  
A body on a bere lay  
þat hauede ben a mody knyzt,  
And lutel serued God to pay;  
Loren he haued þe liues lyzt,  
þe gost was oute and scholde away.<sup>138</sup>

(As I lay in a winter’s night, in dejection before the day, truly I saw a wondrous sight. On a bier lay a body, who once was a proud knight and did little service to please God: he had lost the light of life, and the soul was out and had to go away).

I would argue that the poet of *Als I Lay* deployed motifs suitable *both* to the pulpit and to the classroom. ‘The dexterity of the poet’, writes Woolf, ‘lies in his treatment and combination of the three possible elements in the Body and Soul debate [...] meditative material, moral conflict, and philosophical

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<sup>137</sup> Fulton, pp. 97-98.

<sup>138</sup> Conlee, pp. 20-21. Conlee, p. 20, notes that ‘both the atmosphere and the symbolism of the poem are enhanced by the winter’s night setting, which contrasts with the spring morning settings of the debates concerning love’.

relationship'.<sup>139</sup> Notable examples are the *ubi sunt* motif in the first speech of the soul and the 'eye for an eye' passage in the final section of the poem.

The *ubi sunt* passage of *Als I Lay* is not a simple translation of the analogous treatment of the *Visio Philiberti*,<sup>140</sup> but has been expanded.<sup>141</sup> The *ubi sunt* motif appears in almost every 'Soul and Body' poetical text (with the notable exception of the Old English *Soul and Body*) and is surely one of the prevalent features of this literary sub-genre, from its earlier homiletic examples to the *Royal Debate*. As Woolf notes, the 'potential nostalgia in English' of the *ubi sunt* form 'is nearly always constrained by the moralizing content of the context, provided nearly always by the Body and Soul debate or the visit to the tomb'.<sup>142</sup> As well as reminding the audience that all things must pass, the *ubi sunt* passage of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nytt* also provides a detailed portrait of the sinner, a development already observed in the case of the *Worcester Fragments* and the *Royal Debate*. In *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nytt*, the debating soul and body once belonged to a 'mody knyzt' who spent his entire life chasing the worldly goods (food, rich clothes, dwellings, hunting), which were never enough, and 'lutel serued God'. The sinner who emerges from the text is a well-established character in the vernacular post-Conquest literature. In its complaint, the Soul of the *Worcester Fragments* accuses the body for its greed, vanity, gluttony, and predicts the humiliation of the body.<sup>143</sup> Furthermore, this figure of the sinner is not limited to the 'Soul

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<sup>139</sup> Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 99.

<sup>140</sup> Cf. Ackerman, p. 544.

<sup>141</sup> Raskolnikov, p. 115, counts more than 120 lines in a poem little less than 630 lines long, but the actual *ubi sunt* questions go from v. 17 to v. 56.

<sup>142</sup> Woolf, p. 71.

<sup>143</sup> See Chapter 2.3.

and Body' literature. The proud man who "built castles" and let the poor starve while acquiring goods from other people echoes the depiction of William the Conqueror in the Chronicle poem *The Rime of King William* (vv. 1-2): 'castles he let wyrcean, | 7 earne men swiðe swencean',<sup>144</sup> "he caused castles to be built and severely oppressed poor men". In the *Rime*, the King is also associated with the idea of hunting, being remembered as one who "loved wild beasts more than people" and having forbidden the hunting of wild deer. A striking resemblance, already noted by Wright, can be found in the motif of the grave, "seven feet deep".<sup>145</sup> According to the *Peterborough Chonicle*'s entry for the year 1087, which frames the *Rime* itself: 'se þe wæs ærur rice cyng 7 maniges landes hlaforð, he næfde þa ealles landes buton seofon fotmæl',<sup>146</sup> "he was formerly a rich king and lord of many lands; [now] he has nothing of all these lands but seven feet". The same measurement is used in the *Visio Philiberti*, verse 22: ('vix nunc tuus tumulus septem capit pedes', "now your grave barely measures seven feet") and translated in *Als I Lay*, v. 83/84: 'now schaltow haue at al þi siþe | bot seuen fet, vnneþe þat',<sup>147</sup> "now you shall have but seven feet for all your journey, barely even that". The soul also reminds the body that his wealth is about to be wasted, developing the concept of *relinquent alienis diuicias suas* of Trinity Homily XXIX.<sup>148</sup> In the debate poem, the "false heir" of the body is not willing to use the newly acquired goods for the sake of the departed (vv. 97-104):

Bi fals air shal be ful fain

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<sup>144</sup> Seth Lerer, 'Old English and its Afterlife', in *The Cambridge History of English Literature*, ed. by David Wallace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 7-34, at p. 15.

<sup>145</sup> See Wright, p. 96.

<sup>146</sup> Quoted from Lerer, p. 13.

<sup>147</sup> Conlee, p. 24. "Now you shall have for all your journey about seven feet, just barely that".

<sup>148</sup> See Cataldi, 'Trinity Homily xxix *De Sancto Andrea*', pp. 657-59.

Bi fair fe to vnder-fo;  
Now wele is him þis day y-sein  
Pat litel gode schal for ous do.  
He no wold nouȝt ȝiue oȝain,  
To bring ous in-to rest & ro,  
Of alle þi lond an acre or twain  
Pat þou so sinfully com to.<sup>149</sup>

(Your false heir will be very joyful to receive your fair goods; now it is a joy for him to see this day, he who will do little of good for us. He would not give back, to bring us into rest and peace, even an acre or two of all the land that you so sinfully came by).

The soul also mocks the body for the upcoming dissipation of its property, soon to be ravaged by strangers (vv. 113-120):

Now schul þine sekatours seek  
Al þi gode when þou art ded;  
Al to-gider schal go to wreke,  
Haue men deled a litel bred.  
Ich man pike what he may skeke,  
Hors & swine, schepe & net,  
Gold & siluer, daȝet who rec;  
Ne be we boȝe bi-tauȝt þe qued?<sup>150</sup>

(Now your executors will seek all the goods, when you are dead; they will wreck all together, once a little bread has been distributed.<sup>151</sup> Anyone will pick what he can pillage: horses and swine, sheep and cattle, gold and silver, regardless of who cares; are we not both consigned to the Evil One?)

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<sup>149</sup> Conlee, p. 25.

<sup>150</sup> Conlee, p. 26.

<sup>151</sup> Conlee, p. 16, translates 'it shall be all wasted, (just as if) men have divided up a piece of bread'.

The reply of the body provides evidence of one of the major differences between the *Visio Philiberti* and *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*: the contrast between the two contenders is made more complex in the vernacular poem. The body of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* refuses to take any part of the blame, assigning all the responsibility for the eternal damnation to the lack of good guidance by the soul. From the body's viewpoint, the soul owns the reason and can distinguish right from wrong (vv. 185-188):

For God schop þe aftir His schaft  
 And gaf þe boþe wyt and skil;  
 In þi loking was I laft,  
 To wisse aftir þin oun wil.<sup>152</sup>

(For God shaped you after his image and gave you both wit and skill; I was left in your oversight to be directed after your own will).

Moreover, the soul is not willing to answer to the body. Unlike the *Visio Philiberti* (vv. 138-139: 'adhuc volo stare | et, dum tempus habeo, tecum disputare',<sup>153</sup> "I want to stay here, and argue with thee, while I have got time"), the soul of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* is annoyed by the body's wit, and seems almost shocked by such a mindful answer coming from a loathsome corpse (vv. 201-204):

Þe gast it seyde, "Bodi, be stille!  
 3wo haþ lered þe al þis wite,  
 Þat giuest me þese wordes grille,  
 Þat list þer bollen as a bite?"<sup>154</sup>

(The spirit said to it, "Body, be silent! Who has taught you all this wit, that you give me these violent words, you that lie there swollen like a leather bucket?")

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<sup>152</sup> Conlee, p. 29.

<sup>153</sup> Wright, p. 100.

<sup>154</sup> Conlee, p. 30.

Both disputers use the condition of the body as a probative argument. The soul mocks the body's incapability of perceiving and its hideousness (vv. 245-256), and the body reverses this argument, stating that perception and attractiveness are granted by the soul's presence. Our vernacular poet reworks the above-mentioned defence used in the *Visio Philiberti* by the body as follows (vv. 277-280):

Lodli chaunched is my chere  
 Sin þe tyme þat þouȝ me let;  
 Def and dumb I ligge on bere  
 Pat I ne may sterin hand ne fet.<sup>155</sup>

(My appearance is horribly changed since the time that you left me; I  
 lie on a bier deaf and dumb, I can't stretch either hands or feet).

Once again, the body accuses its soul for its lack of moral guidance, stating that all mankind is bent to sin (vv. 369-376), and the soul ascribes this failure to the compassion and love it felt for the body. Miming the conventions of romance, the soul acts, indeed, as a betrayed lover (vv. 377-384):

Po bigan þe gast to wepe<sup>156</sup>  
 And seide, Bodi, allas, allas  
 Pat I louede euere ȝete  
 For al mi loue on þe I las!  
 Pat tou louedest me þouȝ lete  
 And madest me an houue of glas  
 I dide al þat þe was sete

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<sup>155</sup> Conlee, p. 33.

<sup>156</sup> As suggested to me by Professor Ad Putter, *wepe* might be a scribal replacement of the Northern word *grete*, an error found elsewhere in the Auchinleck MS. See Ad Putter, Judith Jefferson and Donka Minkova, 'Dialect, Rhyme, and Emendation in *Sir Tristrem*', *JEGP*, 113.1 (2014), 73-92, at pp. 86-87.

And þouȝ my traytor euere was.<sup>157</sup>

(Then the soul started to weep and said, Body! Alas, alas, whom I have always loved, for all my love was concentrated on you! You pretended you loved me and made me a cap of glass; I did all that was sweet to you and you have always been my betrayer).

There is no reciprocal concession between the two contenders: ‘at [the] poem’s end, the Body is left to rot, and the Soul is carried away and tormented by devils in Hell. Neither is vindicated: neither convinces the other of the justice or coherence of its point of view.’<sup>158</sup> In its final speech, the body is not persuaded by the soul’s dialectical acumen, but it is moved to remorse by the soul’s desperation and its declaration of betrayed love. The effect is not an act of real penance, as we might expect, but regret (vv. 449-456):

Ȝwan þat bodi say þat gost  
þat mone and al þat soruwe make,  
It seyde, “Allas þat my lif hath last,  
þat I haue liued for sunne sake,  
þat min herte anon ne hadde to-borste  
Ȝwan I was fram mi moder take;  
I miȝte haue ben in erþe kest,

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<sup>157</sup> Conlee, p. 38. As Conlee notes, a “cap of glass” is a helmet that creates the illusion of protection: a ‘delusive protection’, cf. ‘hōuwe (n.) (c)’, *MED Online*, <<https://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/med-idx?type=id&id=MED21393>>, last accessed October 2018. This phrase is also found in Chaucer’s *Troilus* and in *Piers Plowman*. See Walter W. Skeat, *Early English Proverbs, Chiefly of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries, with Illustrative Quotations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), pp. 69-70; Bartlett J. Whiting, *Proverbs, Sentences, and Proverbial Phrases from English Writings Mainly before 1500* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 69 (C32).

<sup>158</sup> Raskolnikov, p. 112.

and I-leizen and i-roten in a lake”.<sup>159</sup>

(When the body saw the soul making that moan and that sorrow, it said:

“Alas, that my life has lasted, that I have lived for the sake of sins, that my heart did not burst as soon as I was taken from my mother; I could have been thrown into the earth, and lain and rotted in a pit”).

This stanza closely parallels the *Visio Philiberti* but, in the Latin source, this passage is part of the initial speech of the soul.<sup>160</sup> The vernacular poet has skilfully switched this lament from the soul to the body and from the beginning to the end of the debate, suggesting that the body is aware that it is bound to eternal damnation and would prefer to have died in childhood than living a life that would have been devoted to sins. The body knows that mankind is inclined to evil, and that it is no exception (vv. 369-370). This natural tendency towards evil is emphasised at the end of the poem, when the soul is carried to hell and, in a desperate call to Jesus, it asks the reason for creating creatures meant to be damned. Most importantly, the points of view of the two contenders seem eventually to overlap (vv. 585-592):

Pou þat wistest al biforn,  
W3i schope þou me to wroþer-hele,  
To be þus togged and totoren,  
And opere to hauen al mi wele?  
Po þat scholden be forloren,  
Wretches þat tou miztest spele –  
A! Weile! W3i lestou3 hem be born.

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<sup>159</sup> Conlee, pp. 41-42. On this stanza, see also Mary Ursula Vogel, *Some Aspects of the Horse and Rider Analogy in The Debate Between the Body and the Soul* (Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1948), pp. 76-77.

<sup>160</sup> Wright, p. 97, vv. 31-33: ‘utinam ex utero fuissem translata | protinus ad tumulum! Et sic liberata | a pœna tartarea mihi jam parata’, “if only I had been taken from the womb straight to the grave! And in this way freed from the infernal torments already prepared for me”. On these verses, see Cartlidge, p. 32.



To ȝeue þe foule fend so fele!<sup>161</sup>

(You, that knew everything before, why did you shape me for disaster,  
to be thus tugged and torn, and others to have all my wealth? Those  
doomed to be lost, wretched ones that you might spare – ah! Alas! Why  
did you let them be born, to give the foul fiend so many!)

The lament is loosely based on a similar passage of the *Visio Philiberti* (vv. 225-226), but is much more developed (probably under the influence of the final speech of the soul in the *Royal Debate*).<sup>162</sup> The motif of the people enjoying the soul's "wealth", in particular, is an innovation by the vernacular poet, which seems to suggest that the soul is still attached to its former possessions and cannot claim absolute innocence and purity. The contenders are, ultimately, partners in crime: an element that makes the contrast of *Als I Lay* more subtle and psychologically complex than any of its Latin counterparts. Body and soul are not irreducible opponents, but intrinsically depend on each other, as is often affirmed in the poem. The body cannot perform any action without the vivifying soul, and similarly the soul cannot make the slightest move on its own, lacking hands and feet; the soul also says that they were both born and brought up by the same woman (v. 295).

While surely effective from a mere literary point of view, this 'interdependence'<sup>163</sup> has also a theological implication: it undermines the rather unorthodox notion (otherwise constant in the 'Soul and Body' literature), of Platonic origin, that the body is the prison of the soul.<sup>164</sup> As

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<sup>161</sup> Conlee, p. 47.

<sup>162</sup> Cf. Heningham, p. 95.

<sup>163</sup> For the concept of interdependence in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyte*, see Raskolnikov, pp. 127-33.

<sup>164</sup> 'In *Als I Lay*, the Soul is the prison of the Body, literalizing Foucault's gesture, but the Body is also the prison of the Soul, and who imprisons whom cannot finally be decided'. Raskolnikov, p. 135.

Woolf notes, the Soul of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature uses the word ‘Body’ as a convenient term that includes everything not turned towards God; in *Als I Lay*, the Body refutes this labelling, claiming that without the soul it ‘would have been incapable of good or evil’,<sup>165</sup> ‘ne wist I 3wat was guod nor il’.<sup>166</sup> The mutual dependence of body and soul is even more marked in *Als I Lay* than in the *Visio Philiberti*, where the body uses its ‘inferiority’ as a probative argument.

As stated above, another striking feature of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nytt* – a further element standing between ‘classroom’ and ‘pulpit’ – is the final ‘eye for an eye’ passage, based on a correspondence between sin and torment: a sinner suffers a punishment similar or antithetical to the sins he has committed.<sup>167</sup> This principle informs the pains of hell described in the *Visio Pauli*, which is, as often stated above, one of the basic texts for development of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature.<sup>168</sup> Silverstein has shown that the *Visio Pauli* provides the ‘detailed expression of the theory of the appropriateness of punishment to sin and of the torment of like sinners with like’.<sup>169</sup> It is worth recalling that MS Laud Misc. 108, which provides one of the two base texts

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<sup>165</sup> Woolf, p. 99. See also Vogel, pp. 50-51: ‘the Body admits it is the rational power of the soul that elevates man above the level of the brute, and it makes reason and intelligence two separate faculties of intellectual activity [...] God has created the soul and given it reason and intelligence’.

<sup>166</sup> Conlee, p. 29, v. 190.

<sup>167</sup> This principle ultimately goes back to the *lex talionis*, expressed, for example, in Exodus, 21.23-27; Leviticus, 24.19-20; Deuteronomy, 19.21; Matthew 7.2. See Peter Armour, ‘Dante’s *Contrapasso*. Context and Texts’, *Italian Studies*, 55.1 (2000), 1-20; see especially p. 4.

<sup>168</sup> See Introduction, I.6, and Chapter 1.1.

<sup>169</sup> Antonette DiPaolo Healey, ed., *The Old English Vision of St Paul*, Speculum Anniversary Monographs, 2 (Cambridge, MA: Medieval Academy of America, 1978), p. 51. See also Theodore Silverstein, ed., *Visio Sancti Pauli: The History of the Apocalypse in Latin together with Nine Texts* (London: Christophers, 1935), pp. 12-14, 69-79; Vogel, p. 21.

for Conlee's edition of the poem, also preserves one of the six Middle English versions of the *Visio Pauli* – one of the four known medieval English verse renditions of this apocryphal text.<sup>170</sup>

The 'eye for an eye' motif of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyte* has, to my knowledge, received little attention. Notably, in *Als I Lay*, all the punishments meted out accordingly to the 'eye for an eye' principle are not suffered in hell. They precede the vision of the underworld and are part of the initial assault of the devils, immediately after the debate has ended (vv. 513-568 of the poem). The first stanza (vv. 513-520), where the soul is forced to drink hot lead, actually relies on verses 279-280 of the *Visio Philiberti*; although not explicitly mentioned, this punishment seems appropriate for the sin of

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<sup>170</sup> According to Brent, p. 169, the scene of the group of devils that escort the soul to hell found in this Middle English stanzaic version of the *Visio Pauli* is close to the final section of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyte*. The stanzaic *Visio Pauli* preserved in MS Laud Misc. 108 is printed in Carl Horstmann, 'Die Sprüche des h. Bernhard und die Vision des h. Paulus nach MS. Laud 108', *Archiv*, 52 (1874), 33-38. Other Middle English versions of the *Visio Pauli* include an early couplet version (MS Digby 86 and MS Jesus College 29), another stanzaic version (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Douce 302), and another couplet version preserved in the Vernon and Simeon manuscripts, all printed in Richard Morris, ed., *An Old English Miscellany: A Bestiary, Kentish Sermons, Proverbs of Alfred and Religious Poems of the 13th Century*, EETS, OS 49 (London: Trübner, 1872), pp. 147-55, 210-32. An Early Middle English prose version of the late twelfth century is preserved in London, Lambeth Palace Library, MS 487; edition in Richard Morris, ed., *Old English Homilies and Homiletic Treatises*, EETS, OS 29 and 34 (London: Trübner, 1867; repr. as 1 vol., 1998), pp. 40-47 (fourth sermon of the *Lambeth Homilies*). Another prose version, of the late fourteenth century, is preserved in London, British Library, MS Additional 10036; printed in Eugen Kölbing, 'Eine bisher unbekannte ME. Version von Pauli Höllenfahrt', *Englische Studien*, 22 (1896), 134-39. These six Middle English versions, according to scholars, are not related to each other. For an overview, bibliography, and dates of manuscripts, see Robert Easting, *Annotated Bibliographies of Old and Middle English Literature. III: Visions of the Other World in Middle English* (Woodbridge: Brewer, 1997), pp. 28-42.

gluttony.<sup>171</sup> The principle of ‘an eye for an eye’ becomes explicit in the subsequent octaves: the soul’s heart is stabbed and wounded because it was ‘so fol of pride’ (v. 526);<sup>172</sup> then it has to wear a ‘deueles cope’ (v. 531)<sup>173</sup> because of the love for rich clothes it had in life. In vv. 537-552, the soul must ride a devil on a saddle full of hot spikes, due to its passion for horses, which is often emphasized in the poem. Finally, in verses 553-568, the soul, who loved hunting in its life,<sup>174</sup> is chased by two hunting dogs coming from hell, before being carried to the underworld.<sup>175</sup> In *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* the

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<sup>171</sup> Cf. Vogel, pp. 21-22.

<sup>172</sup> Conlee, p. 45. See Vogel, p. 10: ‘it may be said that pride, the sin of the feudal and hierarchic age, was his besetting sin, and as such was the source of the other deadly sins’.

<sup>173</sup> Conlee, p. 45.

<sup>174</sup> Vogel, p. 16, notes that ‘hunting and hawking were the chief sports of the gentry’. For a recent discussion on the hunting imagery in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, see David Scott-Macnab, ‘Blowing the *pris* in the Middle English *Debate between the Body and the Soul*’, *Archiv für das Studium der Neueren Sprachen und Literaturen*, 254.2 (2017), 401-10.

<sup>175</sup> The motif of the hell-hounds is of particular interest. Two dogs are cited at verse 562: *Bauston* and *Bewis*. According to Conlee, p. 46, ‘in some accounts of the hell-hounds each hound is sent in pursuit of sinner who indulged in a particular vice, e.g. *Bauwiz* (*Bewis*) specializes in tracking down lechers’. An account of hell-hounds can be found in one of the *Contes Moralises* of Nicolas Bozon (the supposed author of the Anglo-Norman *Desputoison de l’âme et du corps*). In the tale *Quod diabolus venatur animas canibus suis maledictis*, Bozon mentions four pairs of hell-hounds: Richer and Wilemyn, Havegyf and Baudewyn, Tristewel and Gloffyn, Trebelyn and Beauviz; edition in Lucy Toulmin Smith and Paul Meyer, eds, *Les contes moralisés de Nicole Bozon, frère mineur* (Paris: Didot, 1889), 29-37. This tale is, in turn, the source for Chapter 142 of the *Gesta Romanorum*, where another account of the hell-hounds is preserved (the names are Richer, Emulemyn, Hanegif, Bandin, Crismel, Egofyn, Belyn, Beanus); edition in Hermann Oesterley, ed., *Gesta Romanorum* (Berlin: Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1872), pp. 496-98. On the hell-hounds, see Lewis Thorpe, ‘Tristewel et les autres chiens de l’enfer’, in *Jean Misrahi Memorial Volume*, ed. by Hans R. Runte, Henri Niedzielski, and William L. Hendrickson (Columbia, SC: French Literature Publications Co.,

punishments are, then, the reward for a number of behaviours and deeds, rather than the opposite of a single and specific sin. The ‘eye for an eye’ passage of our debate poem is an immediate counterpart of the soul and body’s conduct in life, but it is not part of eternal damnation per se. The pains of hell, in the poem, remain something mysterious, probably out of the human comprehension: it is only said that the real suffering is yet to begin, and then the hell’s pit, where ‘the sun can never shine’, is forever closed.

The concluding vision of the devils emphasises the moral and didactic aim of the poem by representing the torments the Soul must endure even before being dragged down to the underworld. Although it is late for the Damned Soul to call for mercy (vv. 577-600), the readers of the poem can still avoid repenting too late. The dream-vision framework of *Als I Lay* makes this didactic message even more explicit than the previous ‘Soul’s Address’ poetry; it is the narrator, who wakes up from his ‘selly syt’, who offers an example of this new awareness, vv. 617-624:

I þonke Him þat polede deth,  
 His muchele merci and is ore  
 Þat schilde me fram mani a qued,  
 A sunful man as I lai þore.  
 Þo þat sunful ben, I rede hem red  
 To schriuen hem and rewen sore:  
 Neuere was sunne i-don so gret  
 Þat Cristes merci ne is wel more.<sup>176</sup>

(I thank Him that endured death, His great mercy and His pity that shielded me, a sinful man, from many evil things, as I lay there. To those who are sinful, I give them the advice to shrive themselves and

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1977), pp. 115-35. On the *Contes Moralisés*, see also Dean, n. 695. I plan to discuss the motif of the hell-hounds in a future study.

<sup>176</sup> Conlee, pp. 48-49.

sorrowfully repent: never a sin so great was done that Christ's mercy is not much more).

The concluding exhortation of *Als I Lay* stresses the rescuing power of Christ's Mercy, an element that acquires great importance in the subsequent vernacular works related to the 'Soul and Body' theme.<sup>177</sup> The role of Mercy is, for example, one of the central features of the *Porkington Debate*.

### 3.6. THE *PORKINGTON DEBATE* AND THE DIVINE MERCY

The *Porkington Debate*, incipit *The Fadyr of pytte and most of myserycorde*, is a fifteenth-century Middle English version of the *Visio Philiberti*.<sup>178</sup> This poem, in seven-line stanzas with the rhyme scheme ababbcc (rhyme royal),<sup>179</sup> is preserved in a single manuscript (Aberystwyth, National Library of Wales, MS Brogyntyn II.1, formerly known as *Porkington 10*,<sup>180</sup> fols 63<sup>v</sup>-79<sup>v</sup>), and

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<sup>177</sup> The concluding stanza of *Als I Lay* finds an interesting analogue in an Anglo-Norman poem whose sole copy is preserved in MS Arundel 288. The poem, first printed by Richards, 252-63, celebrates the greatness of God's mercy, as clearly stated in the opening quatrain, vv. 1-4: 'Niule pecchere ne puet faire peche si ordz | Si tost come il ceo repent & del tout sen resort | Q[u]e dieux ne lui perdon & q[u]il ne luy confort | Et pur ceo suffry dieux pur peccheours la mort', "No sinner can commit such a heavy sin | That, as soon as he repents, and leaves it entirely behind him, | God won't pardon him and comfort him | And it is for this reason that God suffered death for sinners" (translation by Richards, p. 256). These verses seem almost to be a commentary on the concluding stanza of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyte*, which could have been known to the Anglo-Norman author of *Niule pecchere* and served as inspiration. It is worth remembering that MS Arundel 288 is one of the four manuscripts of the Anglo-Norman debate of the Body and the Soul ascribed to Bozon (it is also the version incorporating verses from *Un samedi par nuit*).

<sup>178</sup> See Takami Matsuda, *Death and Purgatory in Middle English Didactic Poetry* (Cambridge: Brewer, 1997), p. 142.

<sup>179</sup> Woolf, p. 327.

<sup>180</sup> For a description of the *Porkington 10* manuscript, see Auvo Kurvinen, 'MS Porkington 10: Description with Extracts', *Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*, 54.1 (1953), 33-67.

displays a sharp contrast between body and soul – in fact, even sharper than its Latin model and vernacular analogues, as noted by Wendy Matlock.<sup>181</sup> On the one hand, the *Porkington Debate* retains the overall structure of the *Visio Philiberti* (for example, at the end of the debate the soul returns to hell),<sup>182</sup> and translates it very closely.<sup>183</sup> On the other hand, the poet changed some elements to make the contrast more violent, and reshaped its model with ‘both the rhetorical adornments and the homiletic moralizing typical of its period’.<sup>184</sup> For example, the body answers to the soul ‘furiusly and wood’ and with ‘ferfull langagge’<sup>185</sup>, and at the end of its first speech, it tells the soul to go away ‘and wex [vex] me no more’<sup>186</sup>. When the body asks the soul about the hell, the soul at first says nothing and cries (‘the soule sayd nothings, but stod stil and weppyd’<sup>187</sup>), and then accuses the body of lacking in reason, as in the *Visio Philiberti*.

A particular feature of this debate is the role of the narrator, who is no longer confined within a dream-vision context. The debate is, indeed, inscribed within a broader framework: it comes after a long prologue which occupies the first eight stanzas, a prayer to Christ and the Virgin Mary where the narrator exhorts his audience to repent, for the sake of salvation.<sup>188</sup> The emphasis on penance is even more explicit here than it is in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*. Moreover, the debate is followed by a passage of homiletical nature. In the five stanzas following the debate, Fulbert, who experienced the

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<sup>181</sup> See Matlock, pp. 117-19.

<sup>182</sup> Cf. Matlock, p. 144.

<sup>183</sup> Cf. Woolf, p. 327.

<sup>184</sup> Woolf, p. 326.

<sup>185</sup> Halliwell, p. 20.

<sup>186</sup> Halliwell, p. 23.

<sup>187</sup> Halliwell, p. 31.

<sup>188</sup> See Halliwell, pp. 12-14.

vision, adopts a life of poverty although being a “king’s son” (*kyngis sone*),<sup>189</sup> a final sermon, in the last eight stanzas, is focused on the transiency of earthly pleasures and on the need of faith in divine mercy<sup>190</sup>. This latter element can be considered an innovation in the context of the ‘Soul and Body’ debate tradition, possibly meant to balance the fear of eternal damnation.<sup>191</sup> Matsuda notes that the idea of mercy is also featured in the final call to Jesus, when the soul is tormented by devils,<sup>192</sup> but the this element is not unprecedented, because it can be found in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyte*, v. 580 (‘on me, þi schap, nouȝ haue merci!’). As stated above, the idea of a divine mercy that can redeem even sinners is briefly sketched in the conclusion of *Als I Lay* (a statement not too persuasive, after the vivid depiction of the pains of hell). Nevertheless, while in *Als I Lay* this concept is little more than a way to conclude the poem on a hopeful note and underline its penitential message, the *Porkington Debate* develops the idea of a possible rescue through divine mercy by means of the two exhortatory passages by which the debate is framed. The divine mercy, of course, might be of help, but it is dependent on a true act of penance in life. Significantly, no mention is made of Purgatory: ‘the *Porkington Debate* admits no grey area between heaven and hell’, as Matsuda notes.<sup>193</sup> In this context, the debate itself can be considered an *exemplum*, a “dreadful story” useful to make the call to repentance more effective, as in the Old English homilies in which the topos of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ is part of a broader sermon. With the *Porkington Debate*, the ‘Soul and Body’ literature has come back to its homiletic roots.

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<sup>189</sup> See Halliwell, pp. 35-36. On this passage, see Woolf, p. 327.

<sup>190</sup> See Halliwell, pp. 37-39. On the conclusion of the poem, see Matsuda, pp. 144-45.

<sup>191</sup> See Matsuda, p. 146.

<sup>192</sup> Cf. Matsuda, p. 145.

<sup>193</sup> Matsuda, p. 146.



### 3.7. THE CASE OF *IN A THESTRI STUDE I STOD*

*In A Thestri Stude I Stod* reflects a different, earlier stage of the development of the body-soul debate genre. Although often seen as a reworking of the *Visio Philiberti*,<sup>194</sup> the dependence of *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* upon the two main Latin ‘Soul and Body’ debates is, in my opinion, questionable. No close textual parallels between this vernacular text and the two Latin debates can be found. Its place in the dream-vision genre has been questioned,<sup>195</sup> because the narrator simply introduces “a little dispute” (‘an luitel strif’) that he hears “in a dark place” (‘hon an þester stude’).<sup>196</sup> In fact, it is worth asking if this poem can be considered a debate at all.

*In A Thestri Stude I Stod* is preserved in three manuscripts.<sup>197</sup> Conlee notes that it has been ‘composed in imitation of the Latin septenary, a staple of thirteenth- and fourteenth-century homiletic writing, which often includes variants with six stresses and occasionally shows influence of the four-stress alliterative long line’. Nonetheless, the metre ‘is enriched with medial rhyme to create, in effect, an eight-line stanza (abababab of alternating four and three

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<sup>194</sup> Cf. Phillips, p. 253; Richards, p. 175. Wright, pp. 322-23 considered *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* ‘evidently founded upon’ *Un Samedi Par Nuit*, but he did not know the *Royal Debate*, which is the *Samedi* main source.

<sup>195</sup> See Raskolnikov, p. 76.

<sup>196</sup> Conlee, p. 11.

<sup>197</sup> Cambridge, Trinity College, MS B.14.39 (323), fols 29<sup>v</sup>-32<sup>r</sup>, second half of the thirteenth century; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Digby 86, fols 195<sup>v</sup>-200<sup>r</sup>, late thirteenth century; London, British Library, MS Harley 2253, fol. 57<sup>v</sup>, early fourteenth century. The three versions are printed in Reichl, pp. 345-65. On the dates of manuscripts, see ‘Body and Soul (4)’, in *MED Online*, <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/hyp-idx?type=byte&byte=267849>>, last accessed October 2018.

stress lines’;<sup>198</sup> it is, then, metrically close to *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*. Each stanza is assigned to one of the contenders. Rather than using long speeches, the poem displays some brief exchanges between body and soul. The contrast between the two is based on the unwillingness of the body to speak, and not on theological concerns. The body of *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* is, indeed, submissive. From its very first speech, the body accepts all responsibility, and it is perfectly aware that its sins resulted in eternal damnation. The body only wants to rest in peace and it cannot stand the soul’s complaint, seen as a sort of additional punishment. None of the distinctive elements of either the *Royal Debate* or the *Visio Philiberti* can be found in this poem: the body does not claim that punishments are appropriate and arranged by God; it does not argue that the body without the soul cannot move, nor is the soul carried back to hell by demons in the final scene. The final speech of the soul is actually a long description of the seven days preceding the Final Judgment: a visionary passage not found in any other debate. The soul tells the body ‘of tuo miracles & fiue bfore domesdai shulen be’ (v. 58), and in the subsequent stanzas describes some of the Signs before Doomsday that will be revealed in the seven days preceding the Doom. This passage is concluded by a forecast of the seventh and Final Day, with the judgment of the righteous and the wicked.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>198</sup> Conlee, p. 11. Phillips, p. 254, notes that the dark place ‘suggests not only the nighttime when dreams come and the darkness of the grave, but also the indefinite mental area where vision and allegory are enacted’.

<sup>199</sup> The seven-day list of signs of Doomsday is a feature of the apocryphal *Apocalypse of Thomas*, where such a listing is developed; see Frederick M. Briggs and Charles D. Wright, ‘Apocalypse of Thomas’, in *Sources of Anglo-Saxon Literary Culture. The Apocrypha*, ed. by Frederick M. Briggs, *Instrumenta Anglistica Mediaevalia*, 1 (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2007), pp. 71-72. An analogous treatment is the motif of the ‘Fifteen Signs before Doomsday’: see William W. Heist, *The Fifteen Signs before Doomsday* (East

Thus, *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* can be easily divided into two different sections: the debate itself and the eschatological passage. Nevertheless, the dispute of the poem does not portray two different points of view. It seems that the poet of *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* had divided the traditional ‘Soul’s Address’ into smaller sections, then assigning each of them to the two speakers. I agree with Rosemary Woolf’s view:

[*In A Thestri Stude I Stod*] is no more a debate than is the single address form of ‘pene latemeste dai’, for the body’s speeches are all of agreement. The dialogue form has been achieved simply by transforming some of the reproaches of the soul into laments of the body.<sup>200</sup>

The only possible clues regarding any influence of the *Visio Philiberti* are a limited number of textual parallels, also shared by *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*:

1. The incipit of the soul’s speech (v. 4): ‘Wo worpe þi fleis, þi foule

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Lansing, MI: Michigan State College Press, 1952); Graham D. Caie, *The Judgment Day Theme in Old English Poetry*, Publications of the Department of English, University of Copenhagen, 2 (Copenhagen: Nova, 1976), pp. 235-47; Concetta Giliberto, ‘The Fifteen Signs of Doomsday of the First Riustring Manuscript’, in *Advances in Old Frisian Philology*, ed. by Rolf H. Bremmer Jr., Stephen Laker, and Oebele Vries, *Amsterdamer Beiträge zur älteren Germanistik*, 64 (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2007), pp. 129-52; Brandon W. Hawk, ‘The Fifteen Signs before Judgment in Anglo-Saxon England: A Reassessment’, *JEGP*, 117.4 (2018), 443-57. MS Digby 86 also features a poem on the Fifteen Signs before Doomsday (incipit *Fiftene tekenen ich tellen may*), fols 120<sup>v</sup>-122<sup>v</sup>; edition in Edmund Stengel, ed., *Codicem Manu Scriptum Digby 86 in Bibliotheca Bodleiana Asservatum* (Halle: Libraria Orphanotropei, 1871), pp. 53-57. Notably, MS Digby 86 preserves one of the four known versions of *Doomsday* and *Latemest Day*, discussed in Chapter 2.4. For a discussion on the theme of the Final Judgment in *Doomsday* and *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*, and for some textual similarities between the texts, see Eve E. Siebert, ‘Body and Soul Poems in Old and Middle English’ (unpublished doctoral thesis, Saint Louis University, 2008), pp. 154-57.

<sup>200</sup> Woolf, p. 98. See also Siebert, p. 172.

blod, wi liggest þou nou here?’<sup>201</sup> which echoes the *Visio Philberti*, v. 11 (‘O caro miserrima, quis te sic prostravit’<sup>202</sup>), and finds an almost exact equivalent in *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, vv. 14-15: ‘Wo worþe þi fleys, þi foule blod! | Wreche bodi, wyȝ listou so’;<sup>203</sup>

2. The false behaviour of the body (*In a Thestri Stude I Stod*, v. 23: ‘Wile þou vere in þis vourlde þine words weren false and swikel’;<sup>204</sup> *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, v. 436: ‘Pat euere were false and frouȝ’;<sup>205</sup> *Visio Philiberti*, v. 142-143: ‘O caro miserrima, quæ vivens fuisti et fallax et fatua’);<sup>206</sup>
3. The reference to “bed-covers” in the *ubi sunt* passage (*Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, v. 29: ‘Þine cowltes and þi couertoures’; *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*, v. 47: ‘Þine feire cloþes and þine couertoures’;<sup>207</sup> which parallels the ‘lectisternia’ of the *Visio Philiberti*, v. 46).<sup>208</sup>

The two vernacular poems share further textual parallels (some of which have already been observed by Conlee):

1. The idea of the “great pride” of the body: *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*, v. 14: ‘Wer is þi muchele pruide’; *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, v. 21: ‘Ȝwere is al þi michele pride’<sup>209</sup>;

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<sup>201</sup> Conlee, p. 12.

<sup>202</sup> Wright, p. 96.

<sup>203</sup> Cf. Reichl, p. 345; Conlee, p. 21.

<sup>204</sup> Conlee, p. 13.

<sup>205</sup> Conlee, p. 41.

<sup>206</sup> Wright, p. 100.

<sup>207</sup> Cf. Reichl, p. 349, and Conlee, p. 22, who both note the parallel between the vernacular texts.

<sup>208</sup> Wright, p. 97.

<sup>209</sup> Already noted by Conlee, p. 21.

2. The image of the riding horses and the steeds: *In a Thestri Stude I Stod*, v. 15: ‘Þine palefreis ane þine steden’; *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, v. 35: ‘Þi proude palefreys and þi stedes’;<sup>210</sup>
3. The idea that the body is neither the first nor the last that shall rot: *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*, v. 28: ‘Moni fre bodi shal rotien, ne bid I nout nou þe laste’;<sup>211</sup> *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, v. 149: ‘Y nam þe first no worþ þe last’.<sup>212</sup>

It must be remarked that these three latter elements are peculiar to the vernacular poems and cannot be found in the *Visio Philiberti*. It is therefore possible that one of these vernacular poems influenced the other. All the above-cited quotations suggest that the poet of *In A Thestri Stude* could have had access to *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*, and that the *Visio Philiberti* could have reached *In A Thestri Stude* only indirectly, through *Als I Lay*.<sup>213</sup> Furthermore, Heningham has noted that the *ubi sunt* section of *Als I Lay* that includes the ‘steeds’ relies on the *Royal Debate*;<sup>214</sup> on the other hand, there is no other evidence of an influence of the *Royal Debate* on *In a Thestri Stude*.<sup>215</sup> The hypothesis that *In A Thestri Stude* draws on *Als I Lay* is contradicted by

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<sup>210</sup> Already noted by Conlee, p. 12.

<sup>211</sup> Conlee, p. 13, who argues that the theme of the fallen heroes is “developed more extensively elsewhere”.

<sup>212</sup> Conlee, p. 27.

<sup>213</sup> Siebert, pp. 198-205, who also notes the resemblances between the two vernacular poems, argues that they share a ‘common vocabulary’, although not postulating a direct influence of one poem on the other.

<sup>214</sup> Heningham, p. 88.

<sup>215</sup> The image of ‘palefrei’ is also in *Un samedi par nuit*, v. 77: see Heningham, p. 44. Reichl, p. 341, argues that this parallel suggests that the author of *In A Thestri Stude* knew the Anglo-Norman poem.

the relative date of the manuscripts, given that the earliest manuscript attestation of *Als I Lay* is dated half a century later than *In A Thestri Stude*.<sup>216</sup> It is, however, possible that the poet of *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* could have had access to an earlier copy of *Als I Lay*, and it is my belief that he relied only on vernacular material for his composition.

In fact, *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* features many traces of previous and contemporary vernacular ‘Soul and Body’ poetry. As Moffat argues, the poem can be set in the context of the growing interest in Final Judgment imagery, typical of the later ‘Soul’s Address’ works such as the *Worcester Fragments* or *Latemest Day*.<sup>217</sup> The *Worcester Fragments*, in particular, provide ‘a rich repository of images and ideas that appear and reappear in Middle English poems concerned with death’, as Conlee notes: ‘the paltriness of the grave which will be the body’s future house, the *ubi sunt* formula, the body’s dissolution in the grave’,<sup>218</sup> to which I would add the riding imagery, the “great

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<sup>216</sup> As stated above, MS Laud Misc. 108, which preserves the earliest attestation of *Als I Lay* in *A Winteris Nyt*, is dated from the late thirteenth century (cf. Laing, p. 136; Conlee, p. 19). In the manuscript, the poem was copied by a late thirteenth-century hand; see A.S.G. Edwards, ‘Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108: Contents, Construction, and Circulation’, in *The Texts and Contexts of Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108*, ed. by Kimberly Bell and Julie Nelson Couch (Leiden: Brill, 2011), pp. 21-30, at p. 26. In the *MED*, *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* is dated ‘c1250’ and *Als I Lay* in *A Winteris Nyt* ‘c1300’: see ‘Body and Soul (5)’, in *MED Online*, <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/hyp-idx?type=byte&byte=270439>>, last accessed October 2018; ‘Body and Soul (4)’, in *MED Online*, <<http://quod.lib.umich.edu/cgi/m/mec/hyp-idx?type=byte&byte=267849>>, last accessed October 2018. Reichl, pp. 341-42, considers *In a Thestri Stude* earlier and more archaic (‘früher, auch altertümlicher’) than *Als I Lay*, suggesting that the latter had borrowed from *In a Thestri Stude*.

<sup>217</sup> See Moffatt, p. 42.

<sup>218</sup> Conlee, p. xxv; he also mentions ‘the greed and faithlessness of the body’s heirs’, which is found in *Als I Lay* in *A Winteris Nyt* but not in *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*.

pride” and the passion for rich clothes and garments, common to all of these poems.

It is perhaps significant that the largest collection of ‘Soul and Body’ material, preserved in Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.14.39 (323), includes *In A Thestri Stude* (fols 29<sup>v</sup>-32<sup>r</sup>) along with *Doomsday* fol. 43<sup>r-v</sup> (a poem entirely based on the Final Judgment),<sup>219</sup> as well as several thirteenth-century ‘Soul’s Address’ poems discussed in Chapter 2: *Latemest Day* (fols 43<sup>v</sup>-45<sup>v</sup>), *Shroud and Grave*, fol. 27<sup>r</sup>, and *Nu þu vnseli bodi upon bere list*, fol. 84<sup>r</sup>.<sup>220</sup> In the mind of the manuscript’s compiler, a text like *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* surely would have fitted in well with the other works. Furthermore, the Trinity and Harley versions of the poem include a less inspired ‘lengthy moralizing conclusion which is certainly a later accretion’.<sup>221</sup> Notably, this ‘accretion’ seems to have involved the inclusion and adaptation of material found in other ‘Soul and Body’ and death-related lyrics, such as those discussed in Chapter 2. For example, the addition features the food-for worms motif (MS Trinity College B.14.39, v. 123: ‘virmes sitten on his bred and eten of is chin’,<sup>222</sup> “worms sit on his chest and eat from his chin”), the theme of the friends who

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<sup>219</sup> As discussed in Chapter 2.4, *Doomsday* also includes the image of the riding horses and steeds; see Brown, p. 43, vv. 14-16: ‘Monie of þe riche men þat warden fou & gray | Riden uppe steden & uppe palefray | Ha sculen atte dome singen weilaway’, “Many of the rich men that wore particoloured and grey furs, rode upon steeds and palefreys, shall sing ‘alas!’ at the doom”.

<sup>220</sup> For the contents of manuscript Trinity College B.14.39 (323), see Montague Rhodes James, *The Western Manuscripts in the Library of Trinity College, Cambridge. A Descriptive Catalogue*, 4 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900-1904), 1, pp. 438-49; for the ‘Soul and Body’ poetry in MS Trinity College B.14.39 see Reichl, pp. 339-40. Reichl, p. 342, considers the MS Trinity B.14.29 version of *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* to be the closest to the archetype.

<sup>221</sup> Conlee, p. 11.

<sup>222</sup> Reichl, p. 363.

neglect the departed (MS Trinity College B.14.39, v. 124: ‘haues he neuer a frend þat þinkis out of him’,<sup>223</sup> “he hasn’t a single friend who thinks at all of him”), and a striking parallel with the ‘Signs of Death’ lyric *Proprietates Mortis* (MS Trinity College B.14.39, vv. 156-157: ‘wene þe rug is ate flor, þe rof ate nese, | al þis worldis prude nis nout wrid a pese’<sup>224</sup>, “when the floor is at your back, and the roof is at your nose, all the pride of this world is worthless”).

To sum up, *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* looks more like an adaption of an earlier structure to a new pattern than a direct reworking of the *Visio Philiberti* and the *Royal Debate*; in Conlee’s words, it is ‘the best illustration from Middle English literature of this intermediate phase in the evolving body and soul tradition’.<sup>225</sup> In fact, *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* does not feature any appreciable textual relationship with the Latin ‘Soul and Body’ debates: the poem is a sort of compilation, ‘almost a composite piece on the vanity of the world and dread of Last Judgment’.<sup>226</sup> Assuming that *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* does not rely on any of the known Latin ‘Soul and Body’ debates implies that it might depend on other sources: a lost Latin debate poem or homily with a similar submissive body. Alternatively, one might argue that *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* is an original creation, an attempt to model the traditional ‘Soul’s Address’ form on the new debate ‘vogue’, which would be consistent with the

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<sup>223</sup> Reichl, p. 363.

<sup>224</sup> Reichl, p. 365. Compare with *Proprietates Mortis*, vv. 21-22, ‘þanne lyd min hus vppe min nose, | off al þis world ne gyffe ihic a pese’, “then my house lies upon my nose, and I care nothing of all this world.”

<sup>225</sup> Conlee, pp. xxv-xxvi. See also Heningham, p. 84, who considers the poem ‘a reworking of the Old and Middle English addresses of the Soul to its Body’.

<sup>226</sup> Matsuda, pp. 138-39.



hypothesis of an influence of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*.<sup>227</sup> The key issue is that, in spite of having what superficially looks like a debate structure, this poem is surely closer to the ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition, especially to the later twelfth and thirteenth-century texts, though not showing a direct dependence on any of them. *In A Thestri Stude I Stod* can be considered the connecting link between the two traditions, that of the address and that of the debate.

### 3.8. SAVED BODIES, SAVED SOULS. FURTHER VERNACULAR DEVELOPMENTS

Some further vernacular texts, though standing somehow apart from the above-discussed ‘Soul and Body’ tradition, deserve to be mentioned, because they testify to some variations on the main structure of the Middle English debate between the body and the soul. The key thematic development is the possibility, for body and soul (and especially for the bodies), to be saved from eternal torment by means of the greatness of God’s mercy and acts of sincere amendment. The doctrine of Purgatory seem to have played a role in this development; unlike the contemporary *Porkington Debate*, the fifteenth-century debates discussed below seem to admit a ‘grey area between heaven and hell’.<sup>228</sup>

*How Man’s Flesh Complained To God Against Christ* (incipit *The tixt of holy writ, men sayn*)<sup>229</sup> is a debate poem in 27 eight-line stanzas with alternate rhyme, preserved in MS Digby 102, fols 120<sup>r</sup>-121<sup>v</sup> (the manuscripts also contains one of the versions of *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt*). This poem features a debate between the Body and God, where the body laments that it was

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<sup>227</sup> The rhyme scheme (as noted above, mono-rhyming quatrains enriched with medial rhyme, to create an eight-line stanza) also stands somewhere in between *Latemest Day* and *Als I Lay*.

<sup>228</sup> Matsuda, p. 146 (his quotation refers to the *Porkington Debate*; see above).

<sup>229</sup> Edition in Josef Kail, ed., *Twenty-Six Political and Other Poems, From the Oxford MSS Digby 102 and Douce 322*, EETS, OS 124 (London: Trübner, 1904), pp. 89-95.

forsaken by its soul, which chose to live with Christ. The debate is structurally different from the vernacular examples discussed in this chapter (both the body and God have a single speech), and some thematic difference can be noted as well. The death-related, burial imagery is overall discarded; the poem brings forth its penitential, moralising message through an original point of view: ‘by focalizing the text from the disgruntled viewpoint of the body, it draws attention to the body’s foolish inability to see the truth as it really is’.<sup>230</sup> In a long peroration that occupies the main bulk of the poem, the body tells God that its soul was once ‘frend, now is fo’ (v. 22). The soul has drastically changed its behaviour, starting to go against the body’s will, in a passage loosely echoing the traditional antithesis between the two elements (vv. 49-50: ‘wolde y be proud, she biddeþ be meke; | wolde y be gloton, she biddeþ me faste’,<sup>231</sup> “if I want to be proud, she [the soul] orders me to be humble; if I want to be a glutton, she orders me to fast”). The soul now dwells with Jesus, who feeds her with His flesh and blood (v. 83). Notably, the poem features an overturning of the master-servant relationship seen in the *Visio Philiberti*: the body complains that ‘I was mayster, now am y knaue’, v. 47,<sup>232</sup> “I was master, now I am servant”. Quite predictably, in his answer God states that the body is actually performing a self-accusation (vv. 162-168) and that its soul is ashamed of its sins (v. 173); nonetheless, salvation can still be obtained through penance, true repentance and the Works of Mercy, vv 211-213:

Sikenes, pouerte, mekely take;

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<sup>230</sup> Phillips, p. 259. A brief discussion on the poem is also in Arnold B. Van Os, *Religious Visions. The Development of the Eschatological Elements in Mediaeval English Religious Literature* (H.J. Paris: Amsterdam, 1932), pp. 213-14; Mary Patricia Tuck, *A Study of Body-and-Soul Poetry in Old and Middle English* (unpublished doctoral thesis, North Texas State University, 1979), pp. 259-61.

<sup>231</sup> Kail, p. 90.

<sup>232</sup> Kail, p. 90.

richesse and hele wisely spende,  
and helpe all pore for goddis sake'.<sup>233</sup>

(Suffer humbly sickness and poverty; use wisely your wealth and prosperity, and help all poor people for the love of God).

Of more interest are the prose *Dysputacion betwyx þe Saule & þe Body when It Is past oute of þe Body*<sup>234</sup> and the debate poem *A Disputacione betwyx the Body and Wormes*,<sup>235</sup> both preserved in London, British Library, MS Additional 37049, second half of the fifteenth century (*LALME* LP 225) (fols 69-77 and fols 33-35 respectively). These two texts can be considered, in Matsuda's words, 'a late offshoot of the body and soul genre'.<sup>236</sup> As has been shown, the *Dysputacion betwyx þe Saule & the Body* combines elements of the debate tradition with an episode taken from an English translation of *Le Pèlerinage de l'Âme* by Guillaume De Deguileville.<sup>237</sup> This is not the place for a comprehensive analysis of the *Pilgrimage of the Soul*,<sup>238</sup> for the present purposes, it must be pointed out that this adaptation can be considered the only Middle English prose text related to the 'Soul and Body' theme. The opening

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<sup>233</sup> Kail, p. 95.

<sup>234</sup> Edition in James Hogg, ed., 'Selected Texts on Heaven and Hell from the Carthusian Miscellany, British Library Additional Ms. 37049', in *Zeit, Tod, Und Ewigkeit in Der Renaissance Literatur*, ed. by James Hogg, *Analecta Cartusiana*, 117, 3 vols (Salzburg: Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik, Universität Salzburg, 1987), I, pp. 85-89.

<sup>235</sup> Edition in Conlee, pp. 50-62; Hogg, pp. 63-69.

<sup>236</sup> Matsuda, p. 158.

<sup>237</sup> See Matsuda, p. 160; Woolf, p. 406. The text and its manuscript context are discussed in detail by Richards, pp. 181-215.

<sup>238</sup> On the *Pèlerinage*, see Frédéric Duval, Fabienne Pomel et al., 'Guillaume de Deguileville', *ARLIMA*, available at <[www.arlima.net/eh/guillaume\\_de\\_digulleville.html](http://www.arlima.net/eh/guillaume_de_digulleville.html)>, last accessed October 2018; Laurent Brun, Frédéric Duval, and Fabienne Pomel, 'The Pilgrimage of the Soule', *ARLIMA*, available at <[www.arlima.net/mp/pilgrimage\\_of\\_the\\_soule.html](http://www.arlima.net/mp/pilgrimage_of_the_soule.html)>, last accessed October 2018.

section of the prose *Dysputacion betwyx þe Saule & the Body* (which is not inscribed in any dream-vision framework) loosely reworks the main themes discussed in this chapter, such as the emphasis on the body's pride and on its physical corruption, the *ubi sunt* questions,<sup>239</sup> and the body's culpability:

þe saule sayd to þe body þus: Art þu þere, þou wretchyd body, so horribill and fowle stinking, wormes mete & noreschyng of corruption? Wher is now þi pryde and þi fers hert? [...] For whils þat þu & I was copyld togedyr, þou made me lede a ful vnthryfty life, and made me lose many a days labyr in folowyng þe, & my tyme wasting be crokyd ways.<sup>240</sup>

(The soul thus said to the body: Are you there, o wretched body, so horrible and disgustingly stinking, food for worms and provider of corruption? Where is now your pride and your bold heart? [...] Because while you and I were coupled together, you made me lead an ignoble life, you made me lose many days of work following you, and you made me waste my time in crooked ways).

The body's first reply at first follows the usual pattern: 'wat þu noght þat þou was gouerner & mayster of my flesche',<sup>241</sup> "don't you know that you were ruler and master of my flesh?". Nonetheless, the two contenders soon reveal themselves to be skilful opponents, engaging in a debate on metaphors (the way in which fire burns matter is paralleled to the origin of sin), directly mentioning Aristotle's theory of corruption.<sup>242</sup> As Richards argues, the theories put forward by body and soul, 'including that of sin causing bodily corruption, the master-servant metaphor, the metaphors of fire, and the consideration of how things apparently made only of inert matter are caused

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<sup>239</sup> Cf. Matlock, pp. 104-05.

<sup>240</sup> Hogg, p. 85.

<sup>241</sup> Hogg, p. 85.

<sup>242</sup> Cf. Matlock, 133-34.

to move, all derive from Aristotelian philosophy and Augustinian theology'.<sup>243</sup> A distinctive feature of the prose *Dysputacion betwyx þe Saule & the Body* is the reference to Purgatory:<sup>244</sup> 'in erth I lyg cled, hafyng here my very purgatory',<sup>245</sup> "I lie clothed in earth, having here my very purgatory", says the body. Furthermore, in the concluding section, an angel tells the contenders to cease any strife, because such a strife is more suitable to damned souls, and because both of them are 'predestinate to saluacion & hereafter sal be ioyned agayn togeder'.<sup>246</sup> This statement proves that the author of the prose *Dysputacion* was well aware of the debate tradition descending from the *Visio Philiberti*, and it cannot be ruled out that he freely borrowed some concepts (and the overall theme) for the soul's opening speech.

The *Disputacione betwyx the Body and Wormes* is a poem, in rhyme royal (although, Conlee argues, 'closer to being rhymed prose'),<sup>247</sup> analogous to the 'Soul and Body' vernacular debates: it displays a similar structure and some common features such as the dream-vision framework and the food-for-worms motif. As noted by Conlee, a noteworthy aspect of this poem is the sophisticated narrative framework. The narrator escapes from the city because of a "season of great mortality", 'ceson of huge mortalitie' ('one of the periodic outbreaks of the Black Death')<sup>248</sup> and, on his way to the countryside, stops at a church to pray. The narrator then falls into a dream-like vision while observing the epitaph on a tomb of a young lady (vv. 6-21).<sup>249</sup> In his vision

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<sup>243</sup> Richards, p. 196.

<sup>244</sup> Cf. Batiouchkof, pp. 575-76; Woolf, p. 330; Matsuda, pp. 160-62.

<sup>245</sup> Hogg, p. 86.

<sup>246</sup> Hogg, p. 88. On this passage, see also Matsuda, p. 160.

<sup>247</sup> Conlee, p. 51.

<sup>248</sup> Conlee, p. 50. Text at p. 51, v. 1.

<sup>249</sup> For an analysis of this poem, see Wendy Matlock, 'The Feminine Flesh in the Disputacione Betywx the Body and Wormes', in *The Ends of the Body. Identity and Community in Medieval*

the poet witnesses a debate; the two contenders are not a body and a soul but the corpse of a young woman and the worms that attack it. The main theme of the debate is the transience of female beauty and worldly vanity. The body of the lady is shocked by its inevitable decay and outraged by the assault of worms; at one point, she calls some brave knights to help her, in ‘a variation on the *ubi sunt* convention’<sup>250</sup> and miming the conventions of popular romance, vv. 72-85:

Parde, vncortes 3e be vnto me,  
Þus heuely to threte me & manace  
And þus me lefe bot bare bones to see.  
Now where be 3e knyghtes, cum forth in place,  
And 3e worschipful sqwyers, both hye & base,  
Þat sumtyme to me offerd 3our seruise,  
Dayes of 3our lyfes, of hertes frawnchysse,

Sayng permytting 3our lyfe to myne avyse?  
To do me seruys, cum & defende nowe me  
Fro þies gret horribil wormes vgly to se,  
Here gnawing my flesche þus with gret cruelte,  
Devowrying & etyng nowe as 3e may se,  
Þat sumtyme 3e lufed so interly –  
Now socour & defende here my body!<sup>251</sup>  
(By God, you are ill-mannered to me, you that threaten and menace me  
in this way, and so leave me as nothing but bare bones to see. Now

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*Culture*, ed. by Suzanne Conklin Akbari and Jill Ross (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2013), pp. 260-282. For a translation, see Jenny Rebecca Rytting, ‘A *Disputacioun Betwyx þe Body and Wormes*: A Translation’, *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies*, 31.1 (2000), 217-32.

<sup>250</sup> Conlee, p. 55.

<sup>251</sup> Conlee, pp. 55-56.

where are you, o knights, come into position! And you virtuous squires of all kinds, you that once offered me your services, for all the days of your lives, from your nobility of heart, saying that you commended your life to my judgments? To serve me, now come and defend me from these many horrible worms, ugly to see, which are here, as you can see, gnawing, eating and devouring with great cruelty my flesh, which once you loved so devoutly – now rescue and defend here my body!)

The worms employ refined arguments to persuade the lady of the inevitability of corporeal decay, such as the *topos* of the Nine Worthies, which is accompanied by examples of feminine beauty (vv. 93-102).<sup>252</sup> The lady, then, slowly starts to accept death as a natural and inevitable event.<sup>253</sup> Woolf has praised the ‘innovation’ in the ‘gradual psychological change in the dead woman’, noting that ‘normally in the debate form the opponents, as in a scholastic exercise, have taken up fixed positions from which they do not move’.<sup>254</sup> The lady’s acceptance of her present condition will eventually provide her with final salvation: an outcome that, as noted by Matsuda, ‘suggests the purgatorial nature of the condition of the body and, by implication, of the absent soul’.<sup>255</sup> Among the later ‘soul and body’ developments, the *Disputacione betwyx the Body and Wormes* is probably the closest to the main debate tradition, as well as by far the most interesting text.

To these three texts, a further, fragmentary occurrence of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme must be added. Tempe E. Allison has noted and analysed a relevant passage in the fifteenth-century play *The Castell of Perseverance*, preserved in Washington D.C., Folger Shakespeare Library, MS V.a.354

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<sup>252</sup> See Conlee, pp. 56-57.

<sup>253</sup> See Conlee, p. 51.

<sup>254</sup> Woolf, p. 330.

<sup>255</sup> Matsuda, p. 166.

(5031), fols 154-191.<sup>256</sup> The passage is found in scene XXI, vv. 3008-3020:

“Mercy”, this was my last tale  
That evere my body was abowth.  
But Mercy helpe me in this vale,  
Of dampnyng drynke sore I me doute.  
Body, thou dedyst brew a byttyr bale  
To thi lustys whanne gannyst loute.  
Thi sely sowle schal ben akale;  
I beye thi dedys wyth rewly rowte,  
And al it is for gyle.  
Evere thou hast be coveytows  
Falsly to getyn londe and hows.  
To me thou hast browyn a byttyr jows.  
So welaway the whyle!<sup>257</sup>

(‘Mercy’, this was my last word, which was ever concerned with my body. Unless Mercy helps me in this valley, I sorely fear that I will drown in damnation. Body, you brewed a poisonous drink because of the pleasures you yielded to. Your wretched soul shall be cold; I pay for your deeds with hard blows, and all of it is for deceit. You were always covetous to acquire lands and properties by fraud. You have brewed a bitter potion for me. So cursed be that time!)

After this address to the Body, the Soul asks the Good Angel how salvation can be obtained (vv. 3021-3029); a leaf is then lacking from the manuscript. Klausner argues that, in the missing leaf, ‘given the context, it seems likely

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<sup>256</sup> See Tempe E. Allison, ‘On the Body and Soul Legend’, *Modern Language Notes*, 42.2 (1927), 102-06. The passage is also discussed by Tuck, pp. 263-67. On the *Castle of Perseverance*, see Laurent Brun, ed., ‘The Castle of Perseverance’, *ARLIMA*, available at <[www.arlima.net/ad/castle\\_of\\_perseverance.html](http://www.arlima.net/ad/castle_of_perseverance.html)>, last accessed October 2018.

<sup>257</sup> Edition in David N. Klausner, ed., *The Castle of Perseverance*, *TEAMS Middle English Texts Series* (Kalamazoo, MI: Medieval Institute Publications, 2010), p. 86.



that the Good Angel answers the Soul's question [...] with advice concerning its salvation'.<sup>258</sup> It is therefore impossible to state whether a reply from the body originally followed (such is Allison's hypothesis), or the passage was intended as a Soul's Address, without an answer from the counterpart. I would only briefly add to Allison's convincing considerations that other elements in the play (such as the Three Foes of Men, the Seven Deadly Sins, Shrift and Penance, all of which are personified) are also common to the vernacular Middle English Soul and Body debates. Given this shared background, the idea that the reply of the body existed, but was lost, is very likely.

### 3.9. CONCLUSIONS

Medieval debate poetry flourished centuries before the recovery of Aristotle: the *mise-en-scène* of a contrast between two entities dates back to at least the eighth century. Nonetheless, the diffusion of the New Logic exerted a deep impact on the development of this literary genre: the renaissance of dialectic marked a turning point in the history of debate poetry. Similarly, the first 'Soul and Body' debate poem, the *Royal Debate*, is rooted in earlier homiletic treatments on the theme, especially the 'Soul and Body' homilies with their rich repositories of themes like the *ubi sunt* motif, Judgment Day, the enumeration of sins, and the hideousness of the corpse, as well as retaining a rhetorical structure of a forensic nature. The dialectical practices, and especially the academic *disputatio*, marked a major change in the subsequent Latin tradition. From the end of the twelfth century, the debate between the Body and the Soul becomes a dialectic challenge between skilful opponents who try to establish whose fault is more serious. Dialectic also provided a pattern in which the debate could be structured, which is evident, for example

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<sup>258</sup> Klausner, p. 117.

in poems like *Conpar mea nobilis* and the *Visio Philiberti*. Most importantly, the ‘moral preening’ of the soul, the real cornerstone of the previous ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition, is questioned: in the *Visio Philiberti*, the soul has to admit a part of the blame and to acknowledge the body’s wit.

The Middle English ‘Soul and Body’ debates are indissolubly linked to this evolution of Latin debate poetry; not only because of the direct dependence of two of the vernacular poems (*Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* and the *Porkington Debate*) on the *Visio Philiberti*, but also because of the indirect influence of the debate scheme on a backwards-looking text such as *In A Thestri Stude I Stod*. It is also worth remembering that, while the Latin ‘Soul and Body’ debates were emerging, the vernacular ‘Soul’s Address’ poetry was being composed and/or copied: the *Worcester Fragments*, *Latemest Day*, *Over the Bier of the Worldling*, and *Shroud and Grave* are all preserved in thirteenth-century manuscripts.

A poem such as *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* relies on a centuries-old tradition, but is also deeply set in the context of its own time. It represents both the evolution of the ‘Soul and Body’ tradition and a sub-genre of medieval debate poetry. On the one hand, the history of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature can be seen as an uninterrupted process: from the first Latin homilies to the vernacular ‘Soul’s Address’ texts that, from the thirteenth century, started influencing each other. On the other hand, we can identify two distinct moments of vulgarization from Latin to vernacular, from the early Latin homilies to the Old English ‘Soul’s Address’ texts and, centuries later, from the Latin debates to the Middle English debates. These two levels, of continuity and of innovation, overlap. A literary history of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature in England must necessarily deal with the interrelation of these two levels, in order to understand the overall complexity of this sub-genre as well as the peculiarities of every single text.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION

The literary theme of the reproach of the soul to its body is attested between the tenth and fifteenth centuries in several English texts, which aim to exhort the audience to penance. As I have tried to show in this dissertation, the ‘Soul and Body’ theme is characterised by the recurrence and ongoing accumulation of several motifs that enrich and modify the core topos of the soul’s address to its dead body. Through a study of these recurring motifs, I have attempted to reconstruct the literary history of the ‘Soul and Body’ theme in medieval England. For each stage, I have discussed elements of continuity and innovation, considered the relationship between the English texts and their known Latin and Anglo-Norman sources and analogues, and identified textual connections between the vernacular works. I have also documented how some ‘external’ influences contributed to the development of the theme. These influences are both literary (the most notable influences are from eschatological literature and lyrics on death, and also from romance, as in the case of the *Disputacione betwyx the Body and Wormes*) and historical-cultural (the tradition of rhetorical oratory and the emergence of dialectic).

The ‘Soul and Body’ literature in England began with the adaptation and vernacularisation of a Latin topos – the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ – in various Old English homilies and one Old English poem, titled *Soul and Body* by modern scholars. Previous scholarship has already identified the centuries-long background to this topos and its constituent elements: at the moment of death, a damned soul rebukes its body because of the eternal damnation it is doomed to endure. This address of the soul to the body is structured along a distinctive antithetical pattern. At the end of the address, the body starts to

change colour, and the soul is tortured and dragged to hell by demons.

As I have noted, this plot constitutes a dominant 'type' among the Old English 'Soul and Body' texts. This dominance can be shown both by the presence of some of its constituent elements (like the antithetical pattern and the motif of the 'changing of colour') in other related Old English texts and by the enduring popularity of the deathbed setting in later, early Middle English poems. I have identified three main 'types' of Old English 'Soul and Body' texts, which I have grouped not only according to the three different settings of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' (deathbed, Judgment Day, and periodic return, as considered by previous scholarship), but also by the presence of recurring motifs (the structure of the speeches, the presence of the positive counterpart represented by the address of a Blessed Soul). Texts belonging to different 'types', such as *Soul and Body* and *Vercelli IV*, have been considered as influenced by the 'dominant' type of sermons like the *Macarius Homily* and *Napier XXIX*. On the basis of Willard's study,<sup>1</sup> I have suggested that the origins of this basic form and the development of the other 'types' may reflect two different stages of the influence of the *Visio Pauli* in England (the second one corresponding to the diffusion of the *Redactions*), which both shaped the 'dominant' Old English type and modified its evolution. This second stage is reflected by the 'return' of the section of the Blessed Soul (originally attested in Latin texts such as the *Nonantola Version* and omitted in subsequent treatments) and by the differences in the time of the visit of the soul to its body.

Most importantly, the texts of the Old English phase are largely, but not entirely, based on the 'Soul's Address' topos. In other words, the topos is usually inserted into a wider pastoral context. In this wider pastoral context,

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<sup>1</sup> Rudolph Willard, 'The Address of the Soul to the Body', *PMLA*, 50.4 (1935), 957-83.

the topos was combined with other admonitory material such as the Judgment Day theme, the exhortation to penance, and motifs like the *ubi sunt*. In the early Middle English phase, some vernacular authors embedded these elements in the ‘Soul’s Address’ topos, which, as noted by Woolf, was further enriched by the influence of closely-related English lyrics on death and burial.<sup>2</sup> I consider the Trinity Homily *De Sancto Andrea* to be an important witness of this process, a process that was to be fully developed in the *Worcester Fragments* poem.

In *De Sancto Andrea*, the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ is still a topos set in a wider homiletic context, but, at the same time, it shows new contemporary motifs (such as the ‘Signs of Death’ and the post-mortem imagery) along with traditional ones (the antithetical pattern and the presence of the Blessed Soul). With the *Worcester Fragments*, the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ becomes a structured literary theme. A notable development is the post-mortem setting – a reworking of the traditional deathbed scene. This context provides motifs such as the ‘Signs of Death’, the description of the preparation of the burial and of the paltriness of the grave, and the image of friends and heirs plundering the body’s property, all of which can be traced back to contemporary lyrics on death. Another major change is the evolution of the characterisation of the sinner. In the Old English phase, homilists gave very few specific details about the sinner, perhaps to allow a wide degree of identification with the penitential message of the text. However, from the early Middle English phase, it is stated that the body belonged to a knight, or a member of the upper class, indicating a more specific lay readership and a possible shift from a monastic environment to an audience of gentry. This aspect is reflected in the *ubi sunt* motif, which from the thirteenth century

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<sup>2</sup> See Rosemary Woolf, *The English Religious Lyric in the Middle Ages* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 93.

becomes an extended list of earthly goods and pleasures; in the list of sins, which is focused not only on gluttony (as in the Old English phase), but also on vanity and sloth; and in the theme of heirs and strangers eager to ravage the body's wealth. All these elements come to the fore in the *Worcester Fragments*, which, as noted by Henningham,<sup>3</sup> and as I have tried to show, mostly rely on English vernacular lyrics and homilies.

The *Worcester Fragments* are the turning point of the 'Soul and Body' literature in England: not only because of the elements of innovation summarised above, but also for their enduring influence on the theme. The poet of *Latemest Day* was largely inspired by two main sources, the *Worcester Fragments* and *Poema Morale; Shroud and Grave*, though not showing direct textual parallels with the *Worcester Fragments*, is a sort of summary of their themes; *Over the Bier of the Worldling* reworks a Latin source alongside the 'Soul and Body' motifs.

Conlee has stated that the *Fragments* provided a 'rich repository of images and ideas that appear and reappear in Middle English poems concerned with death', which were to become 'commonplaces' in the subsequent 'Soul and Body' debates.<sup>4</sup> The relationship between the tradition of the 'Soul's Address to the Body' and the thematically related debate poems is actually more complex than this. Firstly, the Latin debates of the body and the soul can be considered a sub-genre of medieval Latin debate poetry. Several Latin debates of the body and the soul are attested between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and the subordination of rhetoric to dialectic after the recovery of Aristotle played a major role in the evolution of this sub-genre. I have tried to

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<sup>3</sup> See Eleanor Kellogg Henningham, 'Old English Precursors of the *Worcester Fragments*', *PMLA*, 55.2 (1940), 291-307.

<sup>4</sup> John W. Conlee, ed., *Middle English Debate Poetry. A Critical Anthology* (East Lansing, MI: Colleagues Press, 1991), p. xxv.

show that the poet of the *Royal Debate* used the rhetorical pattern of the *declamatio* to construct a forensic-like debate between body and soul, based on a contrast between two long orations. The poet of the *Visio Philiberti* adopted themes and motifs of the *Royal Debate* and reworked them along the emerging structure of dialectical disputations. At the same time, the only Latin ‘Soul and Body’ debates that were adapted into Middle English show a more or less direct line of development from the previous Latin ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition. The *Royal Debate* is certainly an innovative work, but the concluding vision of devils seems to rely on previous treatments of the theme such as the Latin Macarian tale.

The later Middle English debates of the body and the soul show a similar continuity with the native tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ along with a strong dependence on the contemporary vogue for Latin debate texts. This ‘continuity’ must not be seen in terms of direct textual relationship; rather, there is a common treatment of several motifs that, at that stage, must have become popular and closely associated to the ‘Soul and Body’ theme.

The most evident influence of the debate genre is the change of setting – from a post-mortem scene to the dream-vision framework. The motifs associated with the post-mortem setting were either discarded (such as the ‘Signs of Death’) or embedded in the debate (such as the paltriness of the grave and the preparation of the burial).

I have considered *Als I Lay In A Winteris Nyt* to be a poem suitable both to the classroom and to the pulpit. In this poem, motifs like the characterisation of the figure of the sinner, the *ubi sunt* theme, and the heirs eager to ravage the body’s wealth find their most coherent and artistically achieved representation. In *Als I Lay*, the theme of repentance of the previous tradition mingles with the intellectual conflict of the *Visio Philiberti*, and is ultimately resolved through the sense of betrayed love felt by the soul. Other poems show

different approaches to the debate matter. The *Porkington Debate* reworks the plot of the *Visio Philiberti* as an *exemplum* inserted in a homiletic framework. *In A Thesstri Stude I Stod* attempts to adapt the tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ to the debate structure. I have also proposed that *In A Thesstri Stude* could entirely rely on vernacular material, and especially on *Als I Lay*, and not on Latin sources. This provides further evidence of a thematic continuity between the tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ and that of the debate poems.

The ‘Soul and Body’ theme reached its peak of popularity in England between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Several Old English ‘Soul and Body’ homilies are preserved in twelfth-century copies; the Latin debates of the body and the soul started to emerge in the same century; in the thirteenth century, the tradition of the ‘Soul’s Address to the Body’ was flourishing and the first vernacular debates were composed and copied. After the thirteenth century – which can probably be considered the ‘golden age’ of the ‘Soul and Body’ literature – the ‘Soul’s Address’ tradition was abandoned, and the theme was to become essentially a sub-genre of vernacular debate poetry, eventually leading to its slow decline.<sup>5</sup> Six out of seven versions of *Als I Lay* *In A Winteris Nyt* were copied in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. The enduring popularity of the *Visio Philiberti* in England is testified not only by the *Porkington Debate*, but also, by contrast, by the prose *Dysputacion betwyx*

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<sup>5</sup> Conlee, p. xiii: ‘debate poetry, in contrast to many of the literary genres which were popular during the Middle Ages, is primarily a medieval literary phenomenon. It came into being during the Carolingian Revival; it grew in popularity among the Latin writings of European churchmen between the ninth and twelfth centuries; and it flourished subsequently between 1200 and 1500 in most of the European vernacular literatures. But as the Middle Ages waned, so did the popularity of this genre, and only a few of the handful of debate poems written during the Renaissance possess any particular literary interest’.



*þe Saule & the Body* (where it is stated that struggles between body and soul are more suitable to damned souls than those in purgatory). On the other hand, the two poems *Disputacione betwyx the Body and Wormes* and *How Man's Flesh Complained To God Against Christ* show how the 'Soul and Body' theme was moving away from the centuries-long tradition discussed in this dissertation.<sup>6</sup>

This, I believe, is the literary history of the 'Soul and Body' theme in medieval England, according to the study of its recurring motifs in the context of their sources and development. Although several key studies, many of which have offered an essential background to the present dissertation, have investigated specific stages or literary expressions of the theme (for example, either the Old English phase, or the Middle English debates, or the 'Soul and Body' poetry), it is my hope that this more comprehensive treatment has revealed some significant continuities and discontinuities, and that my findings will encourage and assist in further research on relevant aspects of English religious literature and vernacular debate poetry of the Middle Ages.

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<sup>6</sup> See Conlee, pp. xxvi-xxvii, who considers the *Disputacione betwyx the Body and Wormes* 'one of the final adaptations' of the 'Soul and Body' theme.

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